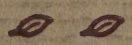
Viscount Leverhulme

By

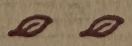
HIS SON



HERE is an extraordinary story of an extraordinary man — builder of a vast industrial concern with over two hundred associated companies, founder of the famous model town of Port Sunlight, and one of the outstanding figures of the business world.

With a wealth of vivid detail, the author describes Viscount Leverhulme's upward struggle from humble beginnings to enormous success, his history-making development of the Congo, his public and political life, and his business philosophy.

The result is one of the most inspiring chapters in the annals of modern industry.



Houghton Mifflin Company

$5.00

THE HARVEST OF THE YEARS

By Luther Burbank
with
Wilbur Hall

At his death last spring, Luther Burbank, the great plant-breeder, left behind him nearly a million words of journals and notebooks, in which he set down something of the processes and results of his magical dealings with fruits and flowers, autobiographical details of his early life, records of his friendships with notable men, such as Edison, Paderewski, John Muir, etc., and finally, thoughts on life and the ends of life. Some months before his death, Mr. Burbank, aided by Wilbur Hall, had begun to put this into form for a book, which has been carried on and completed by Mr. Hall in a volume entitled 'The Harvest of the Years.'

The book is, in essence, an autobiography of one of the most interesting minds that this country has produced. It is also the complete embodiment of a singularly attractive and stimulating personality, of equal interest for the humanist and the student of nature.

Illustrated

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS.

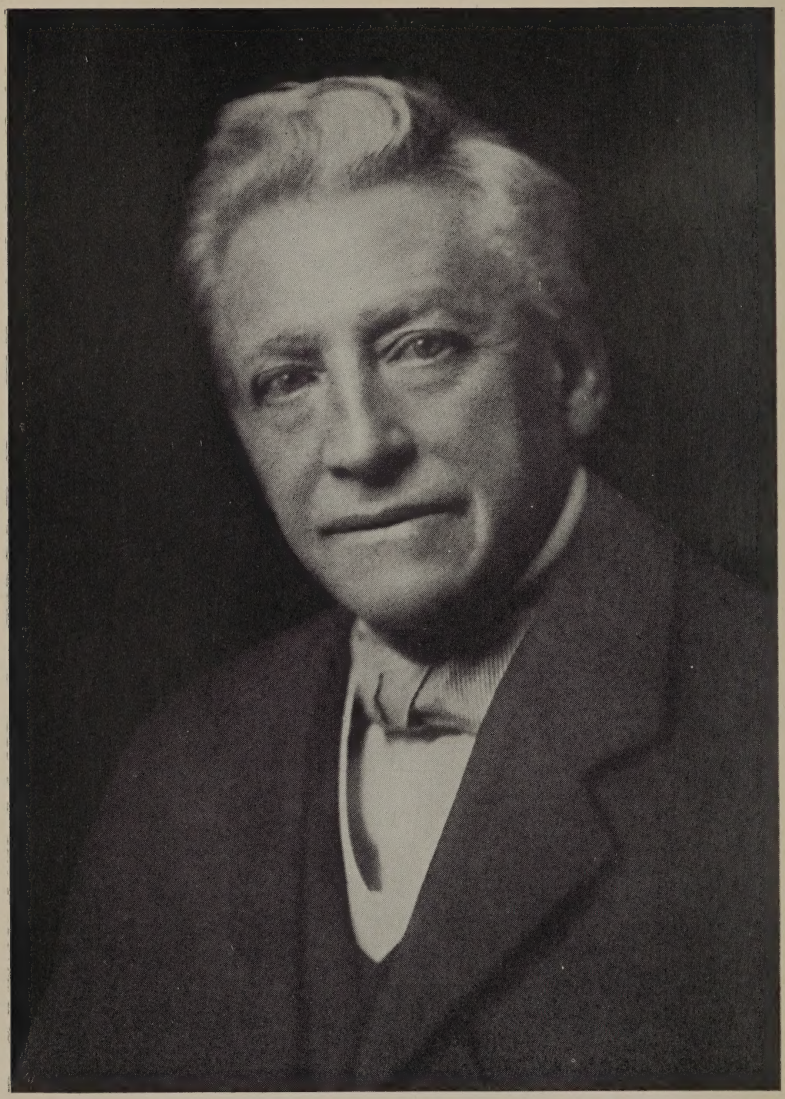
Archive Collection

This book may not leave the Offices and if borrowed must be returned within 7 days

VISCOUNT LEVERHULME

BY

HIS SON



LORD LEVERHULME

Photo by Cecil

VISCOUNT LEVERHULME

BY

HIS SON

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
1927

(*All rights reserved*)

Printed in Great Britain by
Unwin Brothers, Ltd., Woking

FOREWORD

A SON, in writing the biography of his father, is conscious of possessing certain advantages and at the same time of being, in some ways, handicapped. He sees his subject from an angle of intimacy and companionship denied to the average biographer, and writes more from first-hand knowledge and less from hearsay, but at the same time it may be argued that by standing too close he fails to capture the same sense of perspective and proportion as does one who works from a remoter aspect. However, for better or worse, I have essayed the task, my aim having been simply to tell the story of my father's life as accurately as possible and to sketch his portrait as I saw him.

To the general reader, it may sometimes appear as if I were writing the story of Lever Brothers as well as the life of the firm's founder, but so large a part of my father's existence was devoted to his business and the development of the Company was so dominated by his personality that the histories of both inevitably run side by side.

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my warmest thanks to many colleagues and old friends of my father, especially his life-long friend, Mr. Jonathan Simpson, for their sympathetic and much-valued help. I am also deeply indebted to my father's old political associate, Mr. J. W. S. Callie, for the assistance he has given me in connection with the chapter dealing with my father's several electoral contests.

A year or two before my father's death, Mr. Rowland B. Evans, a member of his secretarial staff, wrote a biography, the manuscript of which was purchased by my father's executors. I welcome this opportunity of acknowledging the help I have derived from reading Mr. Evans's manuscript and incidentally of expressing my appreciation of the many tributes to his former chief which it contains. I also wish to thank my secretary, Mr. Ernest Snowden, and several members of my father's personal staff, notably Mr. T. J. Bosley, for the assistance they have given me in sorting out and arranging the mass of corre-

spondence, speeches and newspaper cuttings from which many of the facts in this book have been derived. Finally, my thanks are due to my uncle, Mr. Alex. Paul, for kindly reading through my finished manuscript and making several valuable suggestions.

LEVERHULME.

July 1927.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	FOREWORD	5
CHAPTER		
I.	CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-DAYS	11
II.	ENTERING HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS	19
III.	THE BOLTON WAREHOUSE	25
IV.	MARRIAGE	29
V.	WIGAN	32
VI.	HE BECOMES A SOAP-MAKER	37
VII.	WARRINGTON	42
VIII.	THE FOUNDING OF PORT SUNLIGHT	48
IX.	EARLY JOURNEYINGS	57
X.	DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE	70
XI.	DEVELOPMENTS AT HOME	75
XII.	PORT SUNLIGHT	85
XIII.	THORNTON HOUGH AND 20, NORFOLK STREET	100
XIV.	POLITICS	108
XV.	THE HOUSE OF COMMONS	116
XVI.	BOLTON AND RIVINGTON	123
XVII.	A NEWSPAPER ATTACK AND ITS SEQUEL	133
XVIII.	CO-PARTNERSHIP	141
XIX.	AT HOME AND ABROAD	149
XX.	THE SOUTH SEAS	154
XXI.	THE BELGIAN CONGO	161

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXII.	SHADOW	176
XXIII.	HIS FOURTH JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD AND THE ROYAL VISIT TO PORT SUNLIGHT	180
XXIV.	THE WAR	185
XXV.	THE SIX-HOUR DAY AND OTHER SCHEMES	198
XXVI.	LEWIS AND HARRIS	208
XXVII.	THE ACQUISITION OF THE NIGER COMPANY AND OTHER POST-WAR EXPANSIONS	222
XXVIII.	THE HOUSE OF LORDS	231
XXIX.	BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY	238
XXX.	PUBLIC WORK	251
XXXI.	HOME LIFE	268
XXXII.	ART	275
XXXIII.	HOMES, GARDENS AND ESTATES	289
XXXIV.	LAST JOURNEYS	301
XXXV.	THE END	316
	INDEX	321

ILLUSTRATIONS

LORD LEVERHULME (PHOTO BY CECIL) . . . . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

HARWOOD LODGE, NEAR BOLTON 16

BIRTHPLACE IN WOOD STREET, BOLTON 16

JAMES LEVER (LORD LEVERHULME'S FATHER) 24

LEVER BROTHERS' FIRST FACTORY AT WARRINGTON . . . 32

PORT SUNLIGHT IN 1890 32

LORD LEVERHULME AT VARIOUS AGES 48

PORTRAIT OF MR. W. H. LEVER BY SIR LUKE FILDES, R.A. . . 80

PORTRAIT OF MRS. LEVER BY SIR LUKE FILDES, R.A. . . . 96

THE HILL, HAMPSTEAD 128

THORNTON MANOR 128

THE BUNGALOW, RIVINGTON 168

LEWS CASTLE, STORNOWAY 168

AEROPLANE VIEW OF PORT SUNLIGHT 176

THE KING AND QUEEN AT PORT SUNLIGHT, MARCH 25, 1914 . . 184

A NATIVE VILLAGE IN THE FLANDRIA AREA 272

LEVERVILLE IN THE BELGIAN CONGO 272

THE LADY LEVER ART GALLERY, PORT SUNLIGHT 280

MAP SHOWING DEVELOPMENTS OF LEVER BROTHERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD 288

MR. AND MRS. LEVER AND THEIR SON IN 1905 296

THE JAPANESE GARDEN AT RIVINGTON 304

BRIDGE AT RIVINGTON DESIGNED BY LORD LEVERHULME . . . 304

VISCOUNT LEVERHULME

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-DAYS

LEADING from the busy thoroughfare of Bradshawgate in the town of Bolton, opposite to where the Saddle Inn now stands, there is a quiet street of Georgian houses called Wood Street. The road ends in a wall, on the other side of which is a small garden belonging to the end house on the left-hand side of the street; beyond this garden, and separated from it by a road, there is a playground, at the far side of which rise the grey stone buildings of the Bolton Church Institute. It was at No. 16, Wood Street, about half-way down on the right-hand side, that William Hesketh Lever was born on the 19th September, 1851, the seventh child and elder son of James and Eliza Lever, and at the Church Institute he, in due course, became a pupil.

To-day the Georgian regularity of Wood Street is broken by the intrusion of one or two modern buildings belonging to Banks and Insurance Companies, and several of the houses, including No. 16, have failed to escape the Victorian addition of a bay window. In the 'fifties the street was almost entirely residential, but now, as so often happens when towns extend, the houses are mainly used as solicitors' and estate agents' offices: No. 16—strange indeed are the chances and changes in the whirligig of time—has become the quarters of a Socialist Club.

The family name of Lever is probably derived from the Flemish "Leur." The name is fairly frequently met with in Lancashire, and near Bolton there are three townships which bear it—Great Lever, Little Lever and Darcy Lever. It is almost certain that the subject of this biography was descended in a direct line from one Adam de Lever, of Great Lever, who was living in 1420 and who is mentioned in a Deed

of Exchange of land in Anderton—near Bolton—bearing that date. In the middle of the sixteenth century there was a Robert Lever living in Bolton, whose will is dated 1554; from him my father was directly descended, and there is strong reason to believe that this Robert Lever is descended from one Henry Lever, the great-grandson of the Adam de Lever mentioned above. Lever as a family name is closely linked with Great and Little Lever and Darcy Lever. Charles Lever, the novelist, came from an Irish branch of the family whose forbears came originally from Little Lever.

Bolton in the 'fifties was, as it remains to-day, the most typical of Lancashire towns, and in Bolton was found the quintessence of that sturdy, independent, practical and progressive Lancashire character which, coupled with her natural resources and a climate peculiarly fitted to her staple industry, placed the county in the forefront of nineteenth-century industrial England. Bolton-le-Moors, as its name implies, was once a country town nestling amid rolling uplands of moor and pasture, and to-day it remains the most attractive of the manufacturing towns of Lancashire. A pleasant countryside can still be reached after a tram ride and a short walk, but in the middle of last century, when the population of Bolton was about fifty thousand, one could take country rambles with little effort. A walk to where Albert Road joins Chorley New Road, now a penny tram ride, took one into the country, while Chorley New Road, now the principal residential thoroughfare, had grass growing over it, for the simple reason that there was no traffic to keep it down. Entertainments, in those days, were few and far between. Evenings were usually spent at home in quiet occupation, and at an early hour children were paraded in the drawing-room to say a formal "good night" to their parents. Sometimes a circus would visit the town, and this was a treat which young Lever and his boy friends seldom missed. These circuses, a Christmas pantomime and the great annual fair in Market Square at the New Year, which is still held to-day, though with much of its former glory departed, made red-letter days in the childhood of the generation which is now passing.

Years later, when my father became High Sheriff of his native county, in a speech made at the Shire Hall, Lancaster, he used the following words: "No man had a better or more

consistent right-living father or mother than myself, and whatever I have achieved, I am confident that, next to my wife, I owe it all to the careful training I received from my father and mother."

William Lever's father, James Lever, was born in Bolton on the 26th August, 1809. He was the son of another James Lever, at one time a successful counterpane manufacturer in Bolton, and quarter-master of the local regiment of Militia. As a small child James Lever, my grandfather, attended the school of a Mr. Wilson, a noted Bolton schoolmaster of the time, and when ten years old was sent to Rivington Grammar School. In March 1823, when he was approaching fourteen years of age, he was bound apprentice to John Brimelow, a Bolton grocer. In those days an apprentice "lived in" and was looked after by his master with a strictness exceeding even that of a parent. That the system bore good fruit is undoubted, and in James Lever's case, it gave him that detailed and expert knowledge of his future business which was the foundation of his success.

James Lever remained with John Brimelow until 1831, when he was engaged by Sheldon & Sons to open a new branch shop in Swan Street, Manchester. This appointment was destined to shape his whole future life and, in no small measure, the life of his son in later years, for it was here that he met and became deeply attached to John and Stephen Sheldon, the principals of the business. The Sheldons were devout Congregationalists, and under their influence James Lever, hitherto—by baptism and confirmation—a member of the Church of England, began to attend a Congregational Church in Manchester, the minister of which was a well-known preacher in that city named Fletcher. He also became connected with the Church's Sunday School in Grosvenor Street, where he met Eliza Hesketh, the daughter of a cotton-mill manager, whom he married in April 1839. Through the Sheldons James Lever formed a friendship with Dr. Moffat, the great friend of David Livingstone, and also with Thomas Wright, the philanthropist and prison missionary.

Six daughters were born to James and Eliza Lever during the first eleven years of their married life, and the birth of a son on September 19th, 1851, was not unnaturally an occasion for great rejoicing, especially to the mother, who had not con-

cealed her former disappointment, although "It is all right to me" had always been the father's cheerful reply to any expression of condolence. Of these six daughters, the eldest, Elizabeth, died when nine years old. The second, Eliza Emma, married John Spencer Howarth, and, after his death, Arthur Bromiley. Mary, the third daughter, married William Frederick Tillotson, the founder of the *Bolton Evening News* and one of the pioneers of the English halfpenny evening press. Jane, the next daughter, married John Smith Ferguson, who became secretary and, later, a director of Lever Brothers. The fifth and sixth are Emily and Alice Lever. After my father came his brother, the late James Darcy Lever, who married Annie Kershaw, of Bolton, and died in 1910, and then two more daughters, making ten children in all. The two youngest daughters are Harriette, who lived with her brother at "The Hill," Hampstead, for many years, and Lucy Anne, who, in 1893, married Alexander Paul when he had become assistant editor of the *Daily News* after long service for that newspaper in the Parliamentary Press Gallery, and as a special correspondent and descriptive writer, notably in Ireland during what was known as the Irish Land League's Plan of Campaign, under which Lord Dillon's rents were intercepted and collected by the League. Mr. Paul afterwards joined his brother-in-law at Port Sunlight, retiring from business a few years ago.

The principles of Congregationalism implanted and fostered by the Sheldons, remained with James Lever throughout his life. In those days Nonconformity imposed, or at any rate generally resulted in, a more personally exacting form of Puritanism than is common to-day. On becoming a Congregationalist James Lever gave up wine, and remained an abstainer ever afterwards; smoking he also abjured. He never played cards again, though he countenanced them in his own home and enjoyed watching a game. Gambling he could not tolerate. He also expressed a strong objection to bazaars as a means of raising money for Church funds. Theatres he never condemned, although he only went to them on rare occasions, one such being when J. L. Toole played at the Bolton Theatre and took part in a programme connected with the opening of the Bolton Infirmary. Of concerts he was always fond, and he allowed his daughters to go to private, but not to public, balls. It will

thus be seen that the home influences acting upon William Lever were essentially religious, with almost the full flavour of Victorian Nonconformity.

William Lever once said that his first childish recollection was of the burning of an effigy of the Emperor Nicholas in the year 1854, at the time of the Crimean War. He remembered being lifted on to someone's shoulder at the end of Wood Street to watch the crowd escorting the effigy—an old uniform stuffed with straw and decorated with fireworks—down Bradshawgate. Another early glimpse which we have of him is as a small fair-haired boy of four or five standing on a stool before the drawing-room book-case, arranging the volumes according to size—the earliest evidence of that love of orderliness which was one of his marked characteristics. His originality of mind came to the surface a few years later, when, having made a rabbit hutch, he conceived the idea of a tray of soil on its roof in which to grow food for the rabbits! His elder sisters tell the story of how, on one occasion, when about seven years old, he was playing in the nursery with his brother James. Apparently the guard round the fire had for some reason been removed and James Lever's pinafore caught fire when he was playing near the grate. The elder brother with great promptitude put out the flames with either the hearthrug or the table-cloth.

As a child of six young Lever was sent to a small school for boys and girls on the opposite side of Wood Street, kept by the Misses Aspinwall. There were some half-dozen boys at the school, including Jonathan Simpson, Robert Kenyon, the late George Crowther and the late William Dutton, all of whom remained staunch friends of my father in later years, pre-eminent amongst them Jonathan Simpson, who, in keeping with his Christian name, played "Jonathan" to my father's "David" all his life. At this school my father first found not only his greatest life-long friend, but the little girl who was afterwards to become his wife. Elizabeth Ellen Hulme was the daughter of Crompton Hulme, a wholesale and retail draper, the Hulmes also living in Wood Street. My parents used to say that they never remembered a world without each other in it, and that the bond, which afterwards developed into love and marriage, began as a childish comradeship at "Miss Aspinwall's."

On the death of James Dutton—the brother of William—his widow gave to my father a blue Staffordshire punch-bowl, which had formerly belonged to one of the Misses Aspinwall, and had been bequeathed by her to James Dutton. At the end of each Michaelmas term this bowl used to be filled with a mild form of " port wine negus." There was a goodly quantity of hot water in the concoction, and lemon, sugar and nutmeg. Around it would gather the pupils, and after a little homily from the elder Miss Aspinwall, the head girl in the school would pass the bowl round, holding it to the lips of each pupil in turn, the girls drinking out of one side and the boys out of the other. It was always vowed by the pupils that Miss Aspinwall made the negus too hot on purpose, to make a little go a long way. Pieces of cake completed the banquet.

When nine years old, the age limit for boys at Miss Aspinwall's, William Lever went to a privately conducted school called " Kay's "—the building still stands—in Duke Street, and at thirteen years of age he became a pupil at the Church Institute, Jonathan Simpson accompanying him to both schools.

It may be wondered why James Lever, as a Congregationalist, sent his son to an essentially Church of England school instead of to the Bolton Grammar School, conducted on a broader basis. The answer lies in the personality of the head master, William Tate Mason. Mason, who was a graduate of St. John's College, Cambridge, and a man of high moral character and lovable personality, had a profound influence upon his pupils. His scholarship was sound, and when once convinced as to a course of action, nothing could deter him. His skill on the cricket field also added to his popularity with the boys. Shortly after William Lever left the Institute, Mason resigned owing to a dispute with the Governors, and founded the Bolton High School, whither three-quarters of the boys from the Institute followed him. In 1882 he retired from Bolton and went to live near Abergele on the North Wales coast, where he started a small preparatory school to which many of his former pupils sent their sons.

I have in my possession one or two letters written by my father when thirteen years of age. They are addressed to a great friend of the family, the late John Waugh, who was a few

HARWOOD LODGE, NEAR BOLTON

LORD LEVERHULME'S BIRTHPLACE IN WOOD STREET, BOLTON

Photo by Stewart Bale

years older than my father. The most interesting one reads as follows :—

"DEAR JOHN,

"You will think that I have forgotten my promise to answer any letter you sent me but I have not, I have only been waiting for something to tell you. The day before Good Friday Mamma, James and I went to Blackpool and Papa came on Friday morning. On Friday we had a sail on a steamer and I thought that it would be very nice sailing to Egypt if there was not such a thing as sea-sickness.

"On Saturday, Papa, James and I walked to Fleetwood as we thought it was about six miles from Blackpool but when we got half-way we found that it was 9 miles instead of 6.

"We had a very pleasant day but there was only some Irish steamers in the docks.

"On Monday we went to see Mrs. Clifton of Lytham Hall open the Lytham Pier. A short procession consisting of Sailors, Oddfellows, Volunteers, Rossall School Volunteers and Aldermen of the town, marched through the town. We came home on Tuesday night.

"Guess has got 3 pups, one is for John Bromiley another I think is for Sam Tillotson and the third is for anybody who will have it.

"About a month ago Mary, Jane, Alice and I went to Mrs. Tillotson's party and enjoyed it very much but I should have liked it better if they had not danced all night. We did not come home till 3 o'clock in the morning. The school trip this year is to Windermere but I do not know whether any of our family are going or not.

"I suppose you will have heard of the assassination of President Lincoln, he was at a theatre when a man stepped forward and shot him through the head. A man of the name of Booth is supposed to be the assassin. Mr. Seward another American gentleman has been nearly murdered. These two events have caused a great sensation in Bolton.

"All is going on as usual at Bolton. Please excuse all mistakes as I have put the words together myself.

"Hoping you are in good health,

"I remain, your sincere friend,

"W. H. LEVER.

"BOLTON, *April* 25/65."

The reference to Lincoln's assassination is of interest as Lincoln was, with the possible exception of Gladstone, the statesman whom the writer of the letter most admired.

At school young Lever proved himself sufficiently diligent to win several prizes without earning a reputation for brilliant scholarship. At games he was only moderately successful. His chief fondness seems to have been for swimming, at which he

won a prize, and gymnastics. He left the Institute when he was sixteen, and so ended a period which, if it produced no spectacular boyish triumph, certainly laid, through the influence of a happy and wisely controlled home-life, and a schoolmaster of exceptional qualities, the foundation of much that was to follow.

CHAPTER II

ENTERING HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS

AT the time when James Lever was with Sheldon & Co. in Manchester there was a wholesale grocery business in Bolton owned by a widow named Hesketh, whose son assisted her in the management of it. To Mrs. Hesketh came in due course, to fill the post of assistant, a young man named John Stones, who had been a fellow-apprentice with James Lever at John Brimelow's. Although considerably younger than the widow, John Stones eventually married her, and the name of the firm was changed to Stones & Hesketh. The premises were in Manor Street, on the right-hand side as one crosses the bridge over the River Croal from Bank Street. In November 1841 Stones & Hesketh decided to open a retail shop adjoining their wholesale warehouse, and Stones asked his old fellow-apprentice, James Lever, to join himself and his stepson in partnership and to manage the retail shop. James Lever accepted this proposal, and in the following February the shop was opened. In the window was placed the figure of a blackamoor—shop signs being still the custom—and the shop became known as "The Lower Blackamoor." Business was successfully carried on there until June 1864, when the other partners sold the entire concern to James Lever. The retail shop was then given up and James Lever carried on the wholesale business as sole owner.

In 1867 William Lever left the Church Institute, and on June 29th of that year, rather against the inclinations of his mother, who had always wanted him to be a doctor, entered his father's business. James Lever gave his son a thorough, detailed, strict and disciplined grounding in every business operation. He had to be up and about at seven in the morning, to take down the shutters, tidy up the premises and get matters ready for his father's arrival a little later. It may be mentioned in passing that the Lever family had left the house in Wood Street a few years before this date, and were now living in a

larger house partly above and partly adjoining the Manor Street warehouse. James Lever was loved by his staff, but he was strict with them and was determined that his son should be put through the mill on the same terms as everyone else. This early discipline remained with William Lever all his life, and it is doubtful if the father was ever a stricter master to the son than the son was to his own self in later life. In the light of after events it has often been recalled with interest that the first task which young Lever had to learn was the cutting and wrapping of soap. Proprietary laundry soaps stamped in tablets and packed in "cartons," of which he was later to become the originator, were not then known. The wholesale grocer bought his soap in long bars from the manufacturer and cut it and wrapped it in lengths and weights to suit his customers. From soap-cutting the boy passed to the breaking of lump sugar, and so on from task to task until a good working knowledge of the technicalities of the business was acquired. In due time he passed from the warehouse to the office, and here he was quick to remark upon his father's primitive method of keeping accounts, which consisted simply in having two wire files, on one of which were placed "accounts waiting payment" and on the other "accounts paid." The father, of conservative mind in business matters, was eventually persuaded by his son to allow him to seek the assistance of a well-known Bolton accountant named John Greenhalgh. With the assistance of John Greenhalgh, William Lever introduced a system of book-keeping which remains practically unchanged to this day in the counting-house of W. H. S. Taylor & Co., the successors to James Lever's business.

Young Lever's duties at the warehouse and office did not leave him much spare time, but even in those days he seems to have cultivated the habit, so characteristic of him in later years, of reckoning out almost each hour of the day and spending it to advantage. Time was the friend, not the enemy. The world was "so full of a number of things," and he acquired the power of making of his life a voyage westward with those extra minutes gained each day which are non-existent to him who stands still. He developed his early hobby of carpentry and constructed, among other things, a small fernery and an aquarium, taking country rambles in search of specimens with which to

fill them. He also possessed a microscope, which was an unending source of pleasure, and when out in the country he would always be on the lookout for objects which he could take home and examine. These walks and regular visits to the Bolton swimming-baths and to the Thomasson Gymnasium—built by a great benefactor of Bolton, J. P. Thomasson, whose son, Franklin Thomasson, was afterwards Member of Parliament for Bolton and the founder of the short-lived *Tribune* newspaper—were his chief forms of exercise. In his spare time he took private lessons in French; in this way he acquired a good knowledge of the language and in later life could read it with ease, though he always spoke it with deliberation, reluctance and a "schoolboy" pronunciation. His early studies also included shorthand.

William Lever's younger brother, James, in due course left school and also entered his father's wholesale grocery business. The two brothers were greatly attached to one another, and although each seems to have had his own circle of friends, the two circles overlapped to a considerable extent. Jonathan Simpson continued to be my father's favourite friend, and in the same circle were many other former school-fellows. Another close friend of this period was Alfred Robinson, who became the pioneer of Lever Brothers in Canada and the first manager of the Canadian subsidiary company.

After leaving the Bolton Church Institute Lever found as much time as he could for reading books either at home or at a book-reading circle which he and several of his friends had formed. In this way he acquired a life-long love of Shakespeare and Dickens. In addition to the Bible, a daily reading from which became a habit implanted by his father, Shakespeare and Dickens were, without doubt, the literary influences which most affected his life. Like the average boy of the period, he eagerly devoured the works of Fennimore Cooper, Beadle's American Library and any story "with Red Indians in it." On his sixteenth birthday he was given a copy of Smiles's *Self Help*, and its well-thumbed condition shows how carefully he read it. He often turned with advantage to Smiles's philosophy in later life, and made a practice of giving a copy of *Self Help* to any boy, of an impressionable age, in whom he was interested.

"I know," he wrote many long years afterwards, "that people nowadays are inclined to scoff at Smiles and his gospel of self-help, but my advice to the young man of the present generation is to act on the principles taught in Smiles's philosophy. He will go further than his competitor who does not."

Lever and his friend, Jonathan Simpson, were amongst the first to revel in the humour of W. S. Gilbert's *Bab Ballads* when they appeared in the columns of *Fun*, and they bought the paper regularly. They also enjoyed the American humorist, "Artemus Ward" (Charles F. Browne), who was then much in vogue. Artemus Ward is seldom read nowadays, and it is difficult perhaps to appreciate the popularity which his writings earned when they first appeared. One passage in *Artemus* my father often quoted when he wanted to emphasize some obvious line of action, so easy perhaps as to be overlooked. "It's like the case of the man Artemus Ward tells of," he would say, "De Jones the Corschair of the Gulf. For sixteen years he was confined in a loathsum dunjin, not tastin of food during all that time. When a lucky thawt struck him! He opend the winder and got out!" The quotation is in the author's own manner of spelling. As often as Lever could persuade his father, or more generally his mother, to provide the funds, he would visit the theatre, almost invariably with Jonathan Simpson, and special pilgrimages were made to see the Shakespearian productions of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Calvert at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester. They were patrons of the pit and waited long to secure seats in the front row. In those days there were only four or five rows of stalls, and the first row or two of the pit gave an excellent view for a shilling. The Calvert productions are unique in theatrical history, and it is doubtful if the two friends missed any of them. When eminent lecturers or speakers visited Bolton they would do their best to hear them, and on several occasions they listened to Charles Bradlaugh—a great favourite in Bolton—choosing his historical lectures, such as "An Impeachment of the House of Brunswick," rather than his agnostic addresses. My father also heard Charles Dickens in Bolton when he gave a reading which included the Trial Scene from *Pickwick*. Amongst the entertainers who visited the town, Harry Clifton, with his "Paddle Your Own Canoe" and other songs with the same quaint "moral" flavour, was an

especial favourite. My father never forgot these songs and often quoted verses from them.

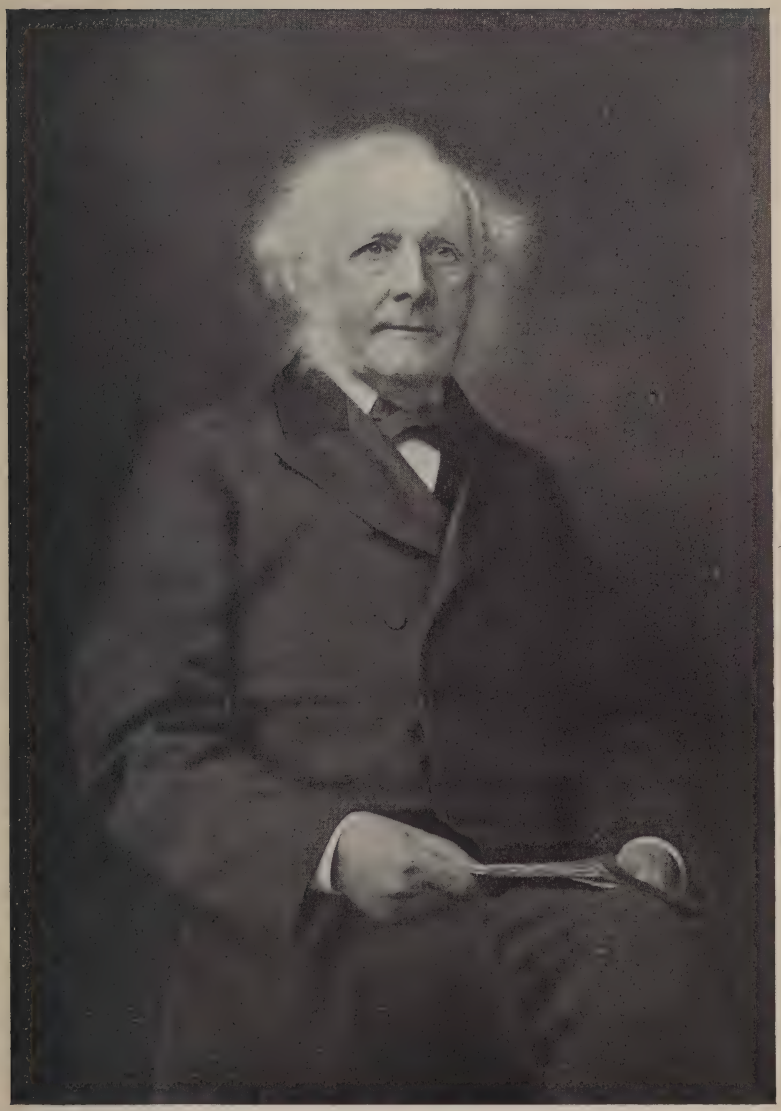
The religious influence dominating Lever's schooldays was equally strong during the period covered by this chapter. The family attended Duke's Alley Chapel, an historic Free Church landmark in Bolton, which owed its foundation to the preaching of Whitfield there in 1750. The chapel stands in a corner, tucked out of sight behind the main buildings of Knowsley Street and Deansgate, but at one time it must have had an aspect of greater prominence, amid pleasanter surroundings, as is evidenced by the name of two adjoining passages, "Spring Gardens" and "Velvet Walks," now but narrow entries through rather squalid lines of cottages. The family programme for Sundays seems exacting nowadays. At 9.15 there was Sunday School, at which James Lever very frequently acted as superintendent. At 10.30 there was morning service, and as long and elaborate extempore prayers and sermons were then the vogue, it generally lasted till 12.15. At two o'clock came "afternoon school," and at 6.30 the evening service. On the first Sunday in the month Communion was celebrated, and the older members of the family would partake, while the younger ones listened to the service from the gallery.

While always generous and open-hearted to those in need, James Lever held strict views regarding the value of money and the economical spending of it. By personal inclination he would never have been a lavish spender, but, apart from this, his large family, comprising seven daughters, made economy a wise precaution. For a son in those days to have his own bank account, until he was married, was a rarity. James Lever provided his boys with all they required in the way of food and clothing and gave them a shilling a week—afterwards increased to two—as pocket-money. If they wanted any little holiday or entertainment, or to make any special purchase, they asked their father for a grant, which was invariably given, but with little margin over and above their minimum requirements. What the strict father allowed was, however, often supplemented by the benevolences of the mother.

Beginning on February 25th, 1868, William Lever kept for some months a diary in neat copper-plate handwriting. The handwritten portion ends on December 28th of the same year,

and the record is then continued in Pitman's shorthand for several pages. The diary makes no reference to the working side of his life, but mentions many a happy fishing expedition, in which his most frequent companions were Alfred Robinson and two brothers named Michael and Edwin Lunn who had been with him at Kay's School. It also describes in considerable detail a memorable holiday at Harrogate in early June with his father and his sisters, Jane and Emily, and visits to Knaresborough, Ripley, Ripon and Fountains Abbey. On August 1st he records in similar detail a visit paid to Chatsworth and Haddon Hall by "a party of seventeen, of which I was one." They returned to Bolton in the early hours of the following morning, and the entry ends with the words, "I never enjoyed a day more in my life."

Visits such as these to Ripon and Fountains Abbey, Chatsworth and Haddon Hall, gave Lever his first interest in and appreciation of architecture. The friendship with Jonathan Simpson, who was by this time articled to an architect, afforded further opportunities for cultivating this interest.



JAMES LEVER (LORD LEVERHULME'S FATHER)

CHAPTER III

THE BOLTON WAREHOUSE

FROM the time he left school until the age of nineteen, William Lever's working hours were spent mainly inside his father's warehouse and office, but, as time went on, he began to chafe at the limitations of indoor work and to crave for wider fields of opportunity. The chance came when he was nineteen and a vacancy occurred on the travelling staff. He suggested to his father that he should engage a young clerk at thirty shillings a week to do the office work he was doing, and allow him—his son—to fill the vacancy as a commercial traveller, thereby saving a salary of four pounds a week, which was the prevailing rate for a traveller at that time. He could not possibly have presented his proposition in a more attractive way, and James Lever, although not approving at first, was eventually persuaded of the soundness and wisdom of his son's proposal. For the next few years Lever's daily round was to leave home after an early breakfast, usually in a one-horse gig, calling upon retail grocers in the neighbourhood of Bolton. His last call was generally made about five o'clock, and he would then return home, make up his order book, and hand in new orders for execution as well as the cash he had collected against previous deliveries.

During this period the staff of Lever & Co. consisted of James Lever, who was, of course, head of the business, his two sons—William Hesketh and James Darcy—two assistants, several clerks, five carters and about seven warehousemen and youths. The proprietor and his sons knew all the staff personally, their joys and their sorrows, and under James Lever's warm-hearted and benevolent leadership, tempered by a strictness which was respected, a strong family spirit grew up within the business. To illustrate it, my father often spoke, in public and in private, with warm appreciation of an incident connected with one of the men in the warehouse named Waters. The business, though in the main progressively prosperous, had been passing through one

of those difficult periods when stocks had to be realized against a falling market. Waters had seen James Lever looking anxious and a little depressed, and had overheard him speak of losses in the business, so he approached his master the next morning and said, " Mr. Lever, I heard you say last night that you were losing money. I have talked it over with the missus, and she says we can manage on sixteen shillings a week until the business gets all right." Wages for a grocer's warehouseman in those days—some fifty years ago—were twenty shillings a week. Needless to say, the offer was not accepted, but the incident deeply touched James Lever, and had its effect upon the impressionable mind of his son, who referred to it many years afterwards in the following words :—

> " I need not say my father did not accept the offer, but the incident has always made a great impression on myself, as showing that the methods he had always adopted of taking a personal interest in all his staff, in their health and family circles, established a relationship between them that was outside the usual limitations of business and what are usually called ' business principles,' which are generally neither business nor principles."

Whilst it is rash to attribute to single incidents all that is sometimes claimed for them, there can be little doubt that, if not from this episode alone, at any rate from the environment which made it possible, Lever derived that " paternal " habit of mind in the conduct of his business which was so characteristic of him, and which was to lead later to " Prosperity Sharing " and " Co-partnership." This family spirit was further illustrated by the giving from time to time, more especially before Christmas, of little parties to the members of the staff and their wives. These entertainments were held in a room over the warehouse usually given up to empty tea-chests and packing-cases. Tea was served at long trestle tables, and the meal was followed by a musical programme, and no doubt there would be a little dancing of a strictly decorous character.

A strong attachment, which had a marked influence on these years of Lever's life, grew up between him and William Frederick Tillotson, who, in 1870, married Mary, the second surviving daughter of James Lever. W. F. Tillotson was the eldest son of John Tillotson, a printer in Bolton. After serving his appren-

ticeship he had joined his father in partnership at his printing works in Mealhouse Lane, and early in 1866 he conceived the idea of starting a halfpenny evening newspaper for Bolton. He obtained his father's approval, and on March 19th, 1867, the first number of the *Bolton Evening News* appeared—the first halfpenny provincial evening newspaper in the country. In spite of gloomy prophecies, the paper became firmly established, and was followed in 1871 by a weekly paper, the *Bolton Weekly Journal*, and, shortly afterwards, by several other weeklies. W. F. Tillotson was also a pioneer in the introduction of " serials " and short stories into newspapers. At first, eminent novelists were opposed to the idea of their works appearing serially in the Press, but Tillotson's perseverance, diplomacy and transparent fairness won them over in increasing numbers. He did not use the stories only for his own journals, but founded " The Tillotson Newspaper Literature Syndicate," through which they were sold to other papers at home and abroad. The unfairness to English authors, whose works at that time, owing to the absence of any International Copyright Law, could be freely copied by American publishers without payment, was apparent to Tillotson, and he did much to help those associated with his syndicate by arranging for the publication of their stories in America on terms which adequately rewarded the authors. His first visit to the States was made in 1884, and he went there again in the autumn of 1888 in company with his brother-in-law, William Lever. The following year he died at the early age of forty-five, leaving a widow, four sons and two daughters. The eldest son in due time joined Lever at Port Sunlight, and prior to his death in 1915 was his senior colleague on the board and in charge of the Overseas Associated Companies of Lever Brothers. W. F. Tillotson's high personal character and business ability had unquestionably a great effect upon Lever, who was seven years his junior, and of all the friendships of his earlier life the one with W. F. Tillotson had the most influence upon his character as a business man.

During the ten years of James Lever's sole proprietorship, the wholesale grocery business had continued to make steady progress, but, even so, it was only by the repeated and persistent arguments of his elder son that he was eventually persuaded to move into larger and more up-to-date premises. The new

building in Victoria Square, now belonging to W. H. S. Taylor & Co., remains to-day almost unaltered.

About the same time James Lever and his family removed to Harwood Lodge, some two miles from Bolton, a picturesque old house built in the reign of James I. In 1757 a somewhat severe Georgian extension was added, but thick ivy has for many years covered the entire building, almost obliterating the difference in architecture between the two halves. The surroundings of Harwood Lodge to-day are not as rustic as they were in the 'seventies, for one can see occasional red roofs in the middle distance and a few chimneys and factory buildings beyond, like the scouts and outposts of a slowly advancing army of bricks and mortar. Nevertheless, it remains as secluded and delightful an old-world home as one can find within such a short distance of Bolton. The removal seems to have caused James Lever considerable anxiety, for his son William, in a letter written on April 17th, 1873, to his future wife, wrote :—

> "He does vex himself about the workmen. Now, if it was me, I should go to the best joiner and painter and tell them to put the place to rights, and only give instructions for such things as I want doing my own way, and then never bother myself any more about it. I know this is perhaps not the cheapest way, but it seems to be by far the easiest and the least trouble, but that is only a consideration to lazy people like me."

The description of himself as "lazy" is amusing, and the opinion expressed is interesting, bearing in mind that in later years few were destined in the building and alteration of houses to have more extensive dealings with workmen—joiners, painters, plasterers, plumbers, and so on—than the writer of the letter.

CHAPTER IV

MARRIAGE

IT was at the end of 1872, soon after his twenty-first birthday, that William Lever became engaged to be married to Elizabeth Ellen Hulme. They had first met, as recorded in an earlier chapter, at the school in Wood Street conducted by the Misses Aspinwall, at which time the Hulmes also lived in Wood Street. Elizabeth Hulme's father, Crompton Hulme, had died in 1863 at the age of forty-three, when his daughter was only twelve years old, and his widow, Margaret Hulme, with her three children, had removed from Bolton to Southport. Although the two families met less frequently after Mrs. Hulme's removal to Southport, the friendship was continued as opportunity permitted, and by the time he was twenty, William Lever's early fondness for Elizabeth Hulme had developed into a much deeper feeling of attachment.

Throughout her life my mother carefully preserved every letter from my father, and the early ones written before their marriage throw a flood of light on this period of their lives. They show the depth and tenderness of the love between them, and the great effect which it had upon my father and his outlook on life. It may be argued that achievements such as those of my father spring entirely from some innate quality of will and ability, and that they would have taken their course regardless of whomsoever he might have chosen for his wife, but I feel convinced that without this particular life partnership these achievements could never have been on the same scale and of the same kind. Again and again in these letters my father speaks of his own feeling of unworthiness in the light of her character. In no case is the language that of maudlin sentiment—it springs from conviction. He is " no worse than most other young men " of his own age, and that is the best he asks her to believe of him, but he writes of his firm intention to show her that he can do better than he has done before. He hopes that she may be as happy with him as he is sure of being with her. He tells

her of all his hopes, his prospects, his progress with his work, his failures and his mistakes. My mother never pretended to be a business woman. Her contribution was sympathy and understanding—an unquestioning belief in the rightness of all that her husband undertook. She never asked for any altered mode of life which might have distracted him from the work he had in hand. She could, with good reason, have demanded more of his time away from business, but she was unselfishness personified, and that is why, without her, Port Sunlight could never have been realized, and the success of her husband's business—at home and overseas—achieved.

Happy is the lover who possesses a sympathetic, discreet and helpful sister, and William Lever certainly found one in his sister Alice. There was not the freedom of intercourse between young men and women in those days that there is to-day. Strange handwriting on envelopes aroused parental suspicion. Meetings had to be planned carefully beforehand in order to appear as accidental as possible. Visits to "Nile Bank"—Mrs. Hulme's house in Southport—were frequently paid by members of the Lever family, and the zeal with which William Lever always accompanied the party had to be explained in a variety of ingenious ways. On many occasions Alice Lever acted as an intermediary, arranged meetings and carried letters between the lovers. She was a great friend of Elizabeth Hulme, and looked upon her brother as a very favoured person to have won her friend's regard. The letters are full of references to Alice Lever, who seems to have been more in her brother's company than any of her sisters at this period, and fully eight out of every ten letters mention Jonathan Simpson, who, about the same time, became engaged to a close friend of Elizabeth Hulme, Miss Mary Helen Lomax, the daughter of James Lomax, a civil engineer of Bolton.

In 1872 James Lever took his son into partnership at a salary of £800 a year. Taking into account the total earnings of the business and the share of responsibility in it which the elder son was now carrying, it was a fair, albeit generous, arrangement for the father to make. To the son, however, it was an income beyond anything he had hoped to earn so soon, and he saw no reason why he should not get married without undue delay. There is evidence in his letters and from other sources that,

while he never lacked courage and optimism in business matters, he was exceptionally modest, not to say timid, about many of his own qualities. He was quite convinced for a time that Mrs. Hulme was not looking upon his advances with favour. However, in December 1872, not long after his twenty-first birthday, he carried matters to a successful conclusion, and gained Mrs. Hulme's consent. In reality the engagement had been a secret one for some little time.

William Lever and Elizabeth Hulme were married on April 15th, 1874, at St. George's Road Congregational Church, Bolton, which had been built twelve years earlier by the congregation from Duke's Alley Chapel. The officiating ministers were the Rev. W. Hope Davison, pastor of the Church, who had baptized both bride and bridegroom, and the Rev. John Chater, minister of the Church in Southport which the Hulmes had attended. After the wedding came the customary "breakfast," and then a picnic to Worsley, near Manchester. The honeymoon was spent in Devonshire and Cornwall.

CHAPTER V

WIGAN

AFTER their marriage my parents lived at No. 2, Park Street, Bolton. My father, I have been told, was thought guilty of needless extravagance at the time because he was not content to take over the house just as he found it, but indulged in one or two specially designed doors and mantelpieces, and in other minor ways improved on the standard decorations provided by the builder of the property. It is a small matter, perhaps, but I mention it to show that in this first house of his own we find evidence of his innate dissatisfaction with anything ugly, commonplace or inconvenient. In every house he took—and he lived in many—he always made changes. He was never content to put up with things as he found them, but was always looking for possible improvements.

Lever's business duties did not appreciably alter on his being made a partner. He continued travelling on behalf of Lever & Co., and most of his time was spent in calling upon the firm's retail customers in Bolton and neighbourhood. In the year 1877, when he was not quite twenty-six years of age, an incident, probably not appreciated in its full significance at the time, was undoubtedly a turning-point in his career. His journey on this particular day lay in the direction of Wigan, and included Westhoughton and Hindley, beyond which villages the business of Lever & Co. did not at that time extend. On this occasion, on leaving the shop of the last customer in Hindley upon whom he had arranged to call, he looked at his watch and found that it was only half-past three; never before had he booked his last order so early in the afternoon. He jumped into his trap, gathered up the reins, and was about to turn the horse's head in the direction of Bolton when he decided, instead of going home, to drive on in the direction of Wigan, and see whether he could secure any orders in a neighbourhood in which his father hitherto had never done any business. The first village he came to was Ince, and he drew up at the first grocer's shop. No order could be secured

LEVER BROTHERS' FIRST FACTORY AT WARRINGTON

PORT SUNLIGHT IN 1890

at this shop, but he was not discouraged and went on to the next, and there he obtained an order for three-quarters of a hundredweight of sugar wrapped up in pounds. He then called at two more shops, booking an order at each. A fifth grocer was called upon, but without result, and it was then time to drive back to Bolton.

Was it a sudden decision to make an experiment—to look over the edge, so to speak—and see what unexplored possibilities might lie beyond, or the carrying out of a resolution already shaped in his mind? My father used to say that he was not a believer in sudden inspirations and unexpected acts on the spur of the moment. He believed that people invariably act from habit of thought, and that, when opportunities or crises come, they generally "fall" or "rise" according to the way in which they have faced the eventuality in their own minds beforehand. I think the probability is that he had for some little time pictured in his own mind's eye a wider sphere of operations for the business and had been awaiting, or even preparing for, just such an opportunity as this for experiment upon his own initiative. He had not talked the matter over with his father beforehand, and it is doubtful whether James Lever would have given the experiment his encouragement. He would probably have argued that the business was a Bolton business, and Bolton had geographical limits, and that the concern was large enough already. The father seldom encouraged the son's expansiveness, although he was the first to applaud it when success came. Whether the decision was sudden or deliberate, however, there can be no doubt that this particular day in 1877 was a landmark in William Lever's life, for Ince led to Wigan, and to a business under his own personal control, a business which was to lead him into the manufacture of soap.

These new accounts opened in Ince meant that the village had to be included in his journey a fortnight later, because the goods had in the meantime been delivered and the cash had to be collected. By saving every possible minute at every shop in the morning, Lever again finished early, and set off for Ince. The cash was collected and more orders booked. So the business grew, until a separate day had to be devoted to Ince once a fortnight, and by rearranging his journeys he found time to push on beyond Ince into Wigan, and open up accounts there.

But as the trade in Wigan grew it became clear that it was foolish to be bringing goods from Liverpool to Bolton and then sending them back to Wigan. The obvious solution was to have a warehouse in Wigan, and so Lever began to look for suitable premises. He inquired what wholesale grocers were already established in the town, and found that there was only one house doing an exclusively wholesale trade. This firm was Ormerod & Co. in Wallgate. He made inquiries and found that it was on the brink of failure, and that the partners were proposing to compromise with their creditors, so the next time he went to Wigan he called upon Omerod & Co., and finally bought the business. Thus Lever & Co. became established in Wigan as well as in Bolton, and William Lever was solely responsible for the management of the new branch. This meant that more and more of his time had to be spent in Wigan until, eventually, the new venture absorbed the whole of his attention. He then saw that he must have a house in Wigan where he could stay during the week, returning to Bolton for the week-ends. After living in furnished rooms for a while he found a suitable house in No. 21, Upper Dicconson Street. Leading from the drawing-room of this house he built a small conservatory, with a rockery for ferns and a fountain. The greenhouse is still there, exactly as it was when first constructed. No. 21 is also distinguished from the other houses in the street by having in the drawing-room a moulded ceiling, a decorated frieze and other adornments obviously not put there by the original builder of the plain, monotonous residences which flank Upper Dicconson Street. Here again Lever left behind him characteristic evidences of his occupation.

Lever & Co., both at Bolton and Wigan, were by this time doing a large business in butter and eggs imported from Ireland, and it became clear to Lever that the method of buying supplies through middlemen resulted in unnecessary expense and a delay of at least twenty-four hours in delivering the produce to their customers. He accordingly paid several visits to Ireland in 1879 and following years, and appointed his own representatives to attend the markets at Monaghan, Armagh, Auchnacloy, Dungannon, Ballygawley and Cookstown. These buyers had their own stands, and used to meet the farmers on their way to market and so secure the earliest and freshest supplies of butter and eggs.

Depots were also established at these points so that the packing and dispatching of the produce could be specially looked after, a great improvement on the happy-go-lucky Irish way of packing it out of doors, even in the rain, the straw thereby becoming damp: Lever also, jointly with his brother, patented a special packing-case for eggs. It was about this time, too, that he began his Press advertising in the butter business to make known "Ulster Fresh Lumps." There was a big turnover in this butter from Ireland, and Lever & Co. became the largest wholesale grocery business to be found between Manchester and Liverpool. It is interesting to notice that in developing the business at Wigan he was already putting into practice on a small scale the policies which he followed later in the case of Lever Brothers, namely, the improvement and better marketing of an article in popular demand, and the principle of going direct to the country of origin in order to ensure an expeditious and dependable supply of materials essential to the business.

It was not long before the premises in Wallgate, Wigan, became too small, and on December 10th, 1881, Lever & Co. opened a new warehouse and office in Market Street, of which Jonathan Simpson was the architect. This mention of Mr. Simpson's name reminds me to say that, at the end of 1879, he designed for his friend a new house in Bolton on a three-acre site at the corner of Chorley New Road and Lostock Junction Lane. The elevations of "Lower House," as it was called, whilst making no pretension to belong to any particular period of architecture, are not unpleasing, and many features, such as *parqueterie*, wainscoting and ornamental plaster ceilings—quite unusual in houses of this type in the Bolton of those days—were introduced. Mr. and Mrs. Lever, however, did not reside for long at Lower House. In 1881 they sold it and, after a short interval spent entirely at Wigan, went to live at another house in the same neighbourhood—"Westcombe," Victoria Road, Heaton.

Lever was always a firm believer in "house organs" as forming a valuable link between a company and its customers, and in 1885 one was started in connection with the business of Lever & Co. under the title of *The Lancashire Grocer*. It was issued monthly and included their price-lists, advertisements of their principal brands, and items of current interest to the trade,

as well as articles of an educational nature for retail grocers and their assistants. Before concluding this chapter I must also mention a habit, developed while running the Wigan business, which became a guiding principle throughout Lever's life—the preparation of quarterly "*pro forma* accounts," that is to say, estimates prepared during each period of three months, of the results, in terms of sales and profits, which it was considered would be achieved during the following three months. This policy ensured a regular scrutiny of costs and expenses, a review of advertising expenditure and a critical examination of stocks. He never departed from this rule, and established it in every business which he created or acquired, and always considered it, in one form or another, essential to the proper management of any commercial enterprise.

CHAPTER VI

HE BECOMES A SOAP-MAKER

IN the summer of 1884 Mr. and Mrs. Lever took a holiday in the Western Highlands of Scotland. After spending a day or two at Oban they boarded a steamer for the Inner and Outer Hebrides, and amongst other places touched at was the town of Stornoway in the Island of Lewis. Here they were joined by Jonathan Simpson, who had come direct from Liverpool by steamer, and thus for the first time Lever set foot on the island of which, towards the close of his life, he was to become the proprietor. From Stornoway they went to Stromness in the Orkney Islands. By the year 1884 Lever had placed the Wigan branch of Lever & Co. on a firm foundation—in fact, it was proving more profitable than the original Bolton business, and during the earlier part of this holiday he allowed the idea of retiring from active business to enter his mind. "I never felt more disinclined to return to business in my life," he confessed to his friend one day while they were being rowed from Stromness to the Island of Hoy, and he actually, to the amusement of his wife and friend, spoke of turning his business into a limited liability company and buying a small island in the Orkneys which was then for sale. "More than once," Mr. Simpson has said to me, "your father has talked to me about retiring from business, but I have always looked upon these announcements as being a prelude not to retirement, but to some further burst of activity." So it was on this occasion. The more Lever thought about it, the more he realized that retirement at the age of thirty-three would, when once the novelty had worn off, become an impossibility. He did not see any attractiveness, however, in merely plodding on at the grocery business, which offered no wildly exciting opportunities for expansion. It was then that he decided that he would specialize upon the selling of soap, and possibly other merchandise as well, under his own distinctive trade-marks. He used to say, later, that he did not know why he thought of soap more than anything else, unless it was because the

wrapping of soap had been his first occupation in the early days of his training under his father. Soap had, of course, figured largely amongst the commodities sold by Lever & Co., and they had specialized since 1874 in a soap called "Lever's Pure Honey Soap." In 1875 the Trade-marks Act had come into operation, and Lever realized that the first thing to be done was to secure a good name for the soap which he was thinking of marketing, for there was but little "good will" in an article bearing such a name as "Lever's Pure Honey Soap." Any other wholesale grocer could market a soap and call it "Pure Honey," "Honey" being only a fanciful name and one commonly applied to a type of soap the colour of which was suggestive of honey. Soaps in those days were supplied by manufacturers in bars and stamped with the name of the grocer who sold it, and possibly with the name of the maker as well, but Lever's idea was to establish a soap which would be of unrivalled quality, and which under a registered name could be advertised and sold universally.

On his return from his Hebridean holiday the first thing which he did was to call upon the best trade-mark and patent agent in Liverpool—the late W. P. Thompson—and discuss with him the question of a suitable trade-mark. It had to be a name easy to remember, easy to pronounce, and one which could be upheld in a court of law if an imitator came along, and, in order to overcome the obstacles which the Trade-marks Act very properly erected, it had not to be descriptive of the article, or refer to quality, or be geographical. Thompson turned up his lists and, after thinking for a while, scribbled down half a dozen names on a sheet of note-paper. At first none of these names appealed to Lever, and, putting the slip of paper in his pocket, he went away feeling disappointed. During the next few days, however, whenever he had a few minutes to spare, he took the list out and studied it. Amongst the half-dozen names suggested was the word "Sunlight." Suddenly, on the third or fourth day, it flashed across his mind that this was the very word. Then he was seized with the terrible thought that while he had been thinking the matter over someone else might have appropriated the word and had it registered. He accordingly took the first train to Liverpool and called upon Thompson to inquire if the name was still available: to his great delight it was, and he promptly instructed the agent to register it. Later inquiries

showed that the word could not only be registered in Great Britain, but in every country where a Trade-marks Act of one kind or another was in force; a fortunate coincidence which added greatly to its value.

At first the new soap—which differed from the great majority of soaps then on the market in that it was made very largely from vegetable oils, such as palm oil, instead of almost entirely from tallow—was made for Lever & Co. by various manufacturers. Soaps made from vegetable oils lathered more freely and were more efficient than tallow soaps, but in the process of their manufacture there were certain technical difficulties which the makers seemed unable to overcome. To add to Lever's dilemma, the makers, when they found his orders for the new soap increasing, wanted to put up their price. He decided, therefore, that somehow or other he must make the soap himself, so he talked the matter over with his brother, who agreed to go into the venture with him, and they spoke to their father. To begin with, James Lever strongly opposed the idea and declared that, with seven daughters to provide for, he would never dream of lending his son any money for such a wild adventure. "A cobbler should stick to his last," he said. In the end, however, no doubt secretly admiring his son's pluck, even if he was staggered at his rashness, he agreed to make him a loan, and this sum, added to what he felt justified in withdrawing from the grocery business, furnished Lever with a starting capital of four thousand pounds. But this was obviously insufficient for the building and equipping of a new factory, and so he set out to find an already established works which he could acquire. The history recorded in the last chapter, when he went in search of a wholesale grocery business in Wigan, repeated itself, and he eventually found a small soap-works in Warrington which belonged to Winser & Co., a firm of chemical manufacturers, who ran it as a side-line, and who, since they were losing money on it, were only too glad to find someone who would relieve them of it. Lever discussed terms with the proprietors and arranged that the soap-works should be leased to him for six years, with an option to purchase the property within that period.

The works at Warrington were taken over by William Lever and his brother in August 1885, but the first consignment of soap was not dispatched for sale until the following January, the

intervening five months being spent in careful manufacturing experiments. The brothers were fortunate in securing the services of Percy J. Winser as their works manager and Edward Wainwright as "soap-boiler." Winser had been in charge of the old business and possessed great technical knowledge in the art of soap-making, while in Wainwright they found a soap-boiler of exceptional skill and of a resourcefulness springing from natural aptitude and practical experience. Lever pretended to no scientific training in soap-making; his chemistry was at this time limited to such elementary knowledge as he had acquired by attending a few evening-classes after leaving school. He therefore left the manufacturing side almost entirely to Winser, devoting his personal energies to general organization and the selling and advertising of the product.

The building up of the sales of Sunlight Soap until a separate factory for its manufacture became a possibility had not been accomplished without opposition. Soap-makers had not been blind to the steady progress—local though it was—of this new brand, which, with its special characteristics, its happy name and its novel advertising, represented something new and original in the trade and a challenge to old traditions. One of the first replies to this challenge was that sincerest form of flattery—imitation. A leading firm of soap manufacturers altered the wrapper of one of their proprietary brands so that it became a flagrant imitation of Lever's article. His own solicitors advised him that he had no redress, but he was not convinced and consulted a London solicitor, Joseph Seymour Salaman, who, since the passing of the Trade-marks Act in 1875, had made a speciality of trade-mark cases, and won several famous ones. Salaman strongly advised him to fight the case and handed over the details to the special care of his son, Ernest Salaman, who went to Lancashire to collect evidence. Sufficient was soon obtained to show that "passing off" had taken place and a writ was accordingly issued against the firm in question. The trial took place in February 1886 before Mr. Justice (afterwards Lord Justice) Chitty, and ended, after the dramatic collapse of one of the defendants' witnesses, in a victory for the plaintiff. Amongst those who gave evidence on behalf of the plaintiffs was Thomas J. Barrett, the chairman of A. & F. Pears, Ltd., and one of the "fathers" of modern advertising. Lever was much gratified by

the ready help given him by Barrett, and thus began a friendship which lasted until Barrett's death in 1914. "We hope it will soon be over now," wrote Lever to his wife from London while the case was in preparation, "and then no more law for us, if we can keep out of it." Alas! it was a vain hope, as this was only the first of many law cases in which Lever, through force of circumstance, became involved. In fact, we again find him in the Law Courts in December 1886, this time to protest against a second deliberate imitation introduced by another firm of soap-makers. From this action, carried by the defendants to the Court of Appeal, Lever also emerged successfully.

CHAPTER VII

WARRINGTON

MY father and my uncle had not been at Warrington long before they saw that the works which they had bought were soon going to be too small to supply the increasing demand for their new product. The growth of the venture meant not only more buildings and plant, but larger stocks of raw materials. The financing of the business had thus become a serious problem. Then again, about this time, the recovery of glycerine from the spent lyes of the soap-pan was made a practical success by Domeier—this valuable by-product having, hitherto, been allowed to run to waste. To take advantage of this new discovery entailed the erection of special plant which added still further to the amount of capital of which the business stood in immediate need. The firm's Warrington bankers, when approached, were unwilling to give the necessary credit until they were satisfied beyond shadow of doubt that the success of the new concern was to be permanent. It was due to the further help given him by his father, and to the fact that he was putting back into the business every penny which it made, that Lever was able to overcome the difficulties of this anxious period. The fact that Warrington was also the home of the second biggest firm of soap manufacturers in the country—Messrs. Joseph Crosfield & Sons—may have influenced the local bank manager's attitude, for Crosfields' position was assured, and he probably thought that the new mushroom concern would not be able to stand up against them and would end in being a "nine-days' wonder." Lever, who had the utmost faith in his business, became not unreasonably impatient with the local bank—in fact, I think these early difficulties coloured his whole attitude towards what he used to call "the banker's mind," for he never quite overcame the irritation he felt at the lack of confidence shown in him at this period.

In 1887, when the brothers realized that the new undertaking at Warrington must absorb more and more of their time, they

arranged with their father that the wholesale grocery business should be floated as a limited liability company under the title of "The Lever Wholesale Grocery Company, Ltd.," with a capital of sixty thousand pounds. James Lever, who was now seventy-seven years of age, and his two sons retained a considerable holding in the company, and Mr. W. H. S. Taylor, who had been on the original staff of Ormerod & Co., became the chief executive. When taking the chair at the first meeting of the shareholders of the new grocery company, Lever was able to announce, in referring to the fact that he and his brother had become soap-makers, that the sales of their new brand "Sunlight" were larger than those of any other single brand of soap in the United Kingdom. William Lever remained chairman of the wholesale grocery business until 1892, when his father succeeded him. In 1898, after James Lever's death, the name of the company was changed to W. H. S. Taylor & Co., Ltd., under which title it still thrives.

Before severing his active connection with the grocery trade, Lever succeeded in carrying into effect a project which he had strongly advocated for some time—the foundation of the Federation of Grocers' Associations of the United Kingdom. Most towns and districts had had Grocers' Associations, but there had been no national policy, no machinery for bringing together grocers from all over the country, and no representative assembly in which they could discuss problems of common interest. These long-felt wants the Federation, inaugurated in 1891, provided.

Advertising as well as salesmanship played a great part in the development of Sunlight Soap, one of the first advertisements to become famous being that of a wonder-struck youth gazing at a placard which bore the legend, "Why does a woman look old sooner than a man?" The same phrase appeared on the wrappers of the soap, and has been used ever since.

While on the subject of Lever's early advertisements, it is interesting to recall a controversy he had with the distinguished Victorian artist, W. P. Frith, R.A., the painter of "Derby Day," "The Railway Station," "Ramsgate Sands," and other well-known genre pictures. At the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1889, Lever bought a picture by Frith of a little girl holding up a white pinafore, entitled "The New Frock," and in due course he used it as an advertisement, calling it "So Clean." Frith

expressed strong disapproval, and considerable publicity was given to the incident in the Press, some papers taking Lever's side and some Frith's. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, however, published interviews with both the " artist " and the " advertiser," and concluded by giving a summary of the views of well-known artists who were consulted. Millais, the use of whose picture " Bubbles " by A. & F. Pears had become the classical example of " high art " in advertising, wrote that he did not think that he had any feeling about advertising ; and that he would only object if the reproduction were badly done. Herkomer, Richmond, Fred Walker and Stacy Marks were also amongst those who approved the use of Academy pictures for advertising purposes.

It was during the Warrington period that Lever made his first and only personal excursion into journalism. This took the form of a weekly paper called *Sunlight*, the first number of which appeared on June 11th, 1887. Although the title may suggest that it was purely an advertisement, it was far from being so in actual fact. Malcolm Salaman, the son of Charles Salaman, the composer, was its editor, and Charles Salaman himself contributed some light musical compositions. Many well-known artists and authors, either famous at the time or destined to become so later, contributed to the paper—Whistler, Jacomb Hood, Dudley Hardy, Bernard Partridge, F. H. Townsend, Harry Furniss, E. W. Hornung, Brandon Thomas (the author of *Charley's Aunt*), and E. J. Goodman being amongst the number ; a series of hitherto unpublished sketches by Richard Doyle was also included. The contributions were mainly of a humorous or light nature. One of the regular features was a causerie on current dramatic and literary events. Fashion articles and serial stories were also included. The total advertising revenue, however, was not large and, sold at a penny, the journal could not possibly pay. When the losses amounted to more than Lever felt justified in incurring, he abandoned the venture, and October 8th of the same year saw the appearance of the last number.

In order to be close to his works, Lever rented a small house in Warrington—No. 9, Palmyra Square—returning to " Westcombe," Bolton, for the week-ends. He made no attempt to furnish this house with more than the simplest necessaries—in fact, the drawing-room, except for window curtains, was not furnished at all, being used simply as a store for empty boxes. He used

to tell the story of a visit he received there one day from a man who came to seek his advice on the subject of advertising. When the caller was announced, he told the maid to show him into the "drawing-room," where with nowhere to sit but on a packing-case he awaited his host. The visitor was a manufacturer of pills, and asked Lever his opinion on—amongst other things—the value of advertisements on the backs of omnibuses. "In your case I do not recommend them," said Lever; "a man running after and jumping on a 'bus is not feeling the necessity for a pill." It was evident from the caller's manner, Lever said, that, not knowing that he had another house, he went away with a much diminished opinion of the reputed successful advertiser whom he had come to consult.

The managerial staff at Warrington was not a large one—in fact, Lever used to say that he himself was advertising manager, cashier and sales manager all rolled into one. He was seldom to be found sitting alone in his private office, but generally in the counting-house or works, getting down to the details of some matter which required attention. It often happened that visitors calling upon the firm failed to recognize him as the head of it. On one occasion a Government inspector walked in and asked to see over the factory. Lever told him that, if he would wait a moment, he would show him over. "That won't do," was the response. "It must be someone different from you to show me round." "Well," said Lever, "if you don't go round with me, you shall not go round with anyone." "Don't be impertinent, young man," replied the inspector angrily. "I'm not," Lever pointed out; "I offered to take you round the factory, and if you don't go with me you shall not go at all." After threatening to report him the visitor flounced out, but was not, however, heard of again. On another occasion an American visitor called, and, when greeted by Lever, inquired, "Am I speaking to Mr. *Levver* or his secretary?" (Americans invariably pronounce "Lever" with the first "e" clipped short.) "You are speaking to Mr. Lever," was the reply, "or all that is left of him."

Lever and his brother went to Warrington, as already mentioned, in the middle of 1885. At the end of that year the weekly output of the factory was 20 tons; at the end of 1886 it had reached 250 tons a week; at the end of the following year the sales had increased still further and the works had to be brought up to a

capacity of 450 tons a week. Lever was again obliged to extend the factory, but had great trouble with the ground landlord. He had found him only too easy to deal with when he originally went to Warrington, as the rescuer of a works which was losing money, but, after eighteen months of success, the landlord's attitude changed, and he asked more rent for the comparatively small piece of extra land that was required than had originally been paid for the whole of the land, works, siding and plant. Other onerous terms were inserted in the lease, and protracted negotiations ensued; but in the meantime orders were pouring in, and in the end Lever was obliged to pay the landlord's price. He resolved, however, that he would lose no time in looking for a freehold site where he could build a new factory and be his own master.

A holiday from business was an ominous pastime for Lever to indulge in. As his holiday in the Hebrides had prefaced his entry into the business of soap-making, so again in the autumn of 1887 did another and more unusual form of holiday become a prelude to the far-reaching resolution I have just referred to. This holiday took the form of a caravan tour in the West of England, in a van which Lever had had specially constructed for him, which comprised a living-room and sleeping accommodation for five people. All the cooking was done on an oil stove by "Sinah," a devoted Welsh servant of the Levers. A start was made from Bristol in the middle of August, and for the first part of their journey Mr. and Mrs. Lever were accompanied by Robert Kenyon, an old school-fellow of Lever's, and his wife. To draw the van Lever had bought in Ireland a splendid pair of steel greys, but they proved quite inadequate for the Devonshire hills, and so an extra driver and pair were hired at each town or village where the van pulled up for the night, to help in the journey to the next halting-place. Clevedon, Minehead, Ilfracombe, Porlock and Lynmouth were the first places visited; at Lynmouth the Kenyons left the van and returned home. After hiring four extra horses, making eight in all, to pull the van up the hill from Lynmouth, Mr. and Mrs. Lever continued their journey, arriving a few days later at Seaton, where the caravan was drawn up on the sandy beach for the week-end, and where they were joined by Jonathan Simpson. August ran into September while they made their way, in easy stages, along the smiling

lanes of Devonshire into Dorsetshire. Ideal weather blessed the holiday, and for mile after mile Lever and his friend walked together through that most beautiful part of England, " Barry," a magnificent St. Bernard, as their companion, Mrs. Lever going on ahead in the caravan to await them at the next village. In this way Honiton, Axminster, Bridport, Dorchester, Blandford, Shaftesbury, Stonehenge and Salisbury were visited. They preferred, when possible, to halt for the night in some quiet village rather than in a town, to the great interest and delight of the rustic inhabitants, who quite made up their minds that, because they travelled in a caravan, the party must be gipsies or " show people." At one place rumour made them a circus, at another " Pepper's Ghost " ! It was a wonderful holiday, too quickly over, and alas ! never to be repeated. Like the holiday in the Hebrides, it illustrated the French saying, " Reculer pour mieux sauter," for during many hours of that peaceful holiday Lever was turning over in his thoughts the pros and cons of his next great decision. Bearing in mind what a tireless traveller he was to become in establishing his business all over the globe, it seems fitting that the inception of the works and village of Port Sunlight, from which all the rest was to spring, should take shape in his mind within that symbol of the nomadic life—a caravan.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FOUNDING OF PORT SUNLIGHT

MY father was thirty-six years of age when he decided to leave Warrington and seek a fresh site with more ideal conditions for the further development of his business. When carrying out extensions at the Warrington factory, he had sought the assistance of a well-known local architect named William Owen. Owen was a most capable business man as well as a clever architect, and he and Lever soon became close personal friends. Together they studied carefully the Ordnance maps covering the country from Warrington to the mouth of the Mersey on both sides of the river and then made a number of journeys to the spots which appeared, from the map, most suitable for the new works. Certain requirements had to be fulfilled for the site to be ideal—fairly cheap land, water frontage, railway facilities and a supply of labour in the neighbourhood. They first looked for what they wanted on the Lancashire side of the river, but failed to find it. Their next visit was to the Cheshire side. Crossing over to Birkenhead, they made their way through Rock Ferry to New Ferry, and, walking in a southerly direction, were soon in country lanes and open fields. The picturesque village of Lower Bebington—now so rapidly becoming suburban—was then an almost isolated country hamlet. The main railway line from Birkenhead to Chester passes just to the east of Bebington, and the country between this railway line and the River Mersey where the village of Port Sunlight now stands was in those days composed of open fields and marshes, with some blocks of squalid and ill-kept cottage property bordering on New Ferry. This slum property, which Lever in due course bought and swept away, stood where the village street called Primrose Hill now runs. Lever and his architect were walking with their backs to Birkenhead across the fields I have referred to, when they came to a gate—the spot was a few yards in front of where now stands the main entrance to Lever Brothers' offices—and there they saw before them the very land they had been looking for. To their right ran the

GROUPED PHOTO OF LORD LEVERHULME AT VARIOUS AGES,

[*By permission of "Pearson's Magazine"*]

main railway line from Birkenhead to London, and a few hundred yards to their left a muddy tidal creek wound its way to the Mersey. All the requirements were there, transport facilities by rail and water, plenty of land, and the necessary supply of labour in the not too far distant town of Birkenhead. "Here we are," said Lever. "This is the site I will choose."

In July 1887 William Owen approached the owners of the land on behalf of his client, and after negotiations extending over the rest of that year, an area of fifty-two acres was acquired. From the start Lever intended to build houses for the work-people, and of the fifty-two acres he allocated a little less than half to the offices and works and the remainder to the village which he had in mind to build. In the meantime, Owen was proceeding with the plans for the works, his client being in close collaboration.

The ceremony of cutting the first sod was performed by Mrs. Lever on March 3rd, 1888. The invited guests assembled on the Liverpool landing-stage and crossed to New Ferry by steamer, from where they were taken in a steam barge up the tidal creek to the site of the new works, which Lever had decided to name "Port Sunlight." On their arrival the architect presented Mrs. Lever with a silver spade and asked her to perform the ceremony. "Every step we have taken," he said, "has been watched with the greatest care and interest by Mrs. Lever. I have the very greatest pleasure in presenting to her this implement of peace with which we, as Lancashire men, invade Cheshire." After cutting the sod, Mrs. Lever made a brief speech wishing success to the new works, and a vote of thanks to his daughter-in-law by James Lever concluded the simple ceremony. In the evening, to celebrate the occasion, a banquet was held at the Bear's Paw Restaurant in Liverpool, and in the course of his speech at the dinner Lever said :—

"It is my hope and my brother's hope, some day, to build houses in which our work-people will be able to live and be comfortable—semi-detached houses, with gardens back and front, in which they will be able to know more about the science of life than they can in a back slum, and in which they will learn that there is more enjoyment in life than in the mere going to and returning from work and looking forward to Saturday night to draw their wages. We have been lucky in all the things I have named to you" (by this he meant the choice of a name for their product, the finding of a suitable site and the help of a loyal and efficient staff), "but we have not been lucky in the way in which we

are said to have been by our competitors and other people, who think we have just held our mouths open and success has dropped in. I do not know whether you have heard the story about Mahomet. When he was told to trust in God and leave the camels free, he replied, 'Tie them up and trust in God.' That, I hope, will always be our motto."

After the cutting of the first sod the building of the new works proceeded apace. The original factory consisted of little more than the eastern half of what is now "No. 1 Soapery," together with offices, various detached buildings and a wharf, alongside which barges could bring the raw materials at high tide, and manufacture was commenced there about the middle of January 1889.

Realizing that his future work would lie at Port Sunlight, Lever went in search of a new home in the neighbourhood and bought from Mr. Thomas B. Forwood, the father of Sir William B. Forwood, Thornton Manor, near the village of Thornton Hough, which is in the middle of the Wirral peninsula about midway between the Mersey and the Dee. Very little now remains of the original Thornton Manor, for Lever altered and enlarged it several times. Originally, it was a red sandstone building dating from the 'forties and typical of the domestic architecture of the period. Mr. and Mrs. Lever removed to Thornton Hough in September 1888. In the meantime, on the 25th of March in that year, their only surviving child (the author of this book) had been born to them at "Westcombe," Heaton.

Lever was not long in carrying out his intention of building cottages for his work-people, for in December 1888 he gave William Owen instructions to prepare plans for twenty-eight cottages and an entrance-lodge, and the work was commenced in the spring of the following year. Considerable scepticism appears to have existed in the neighbourhood when Port Sunlight was first started. "The peaceful invasion of Cheshire by men from Lancashire," as Owen called it, not unnaturally aroused considerable excitement in the district, and the question on most people's lips was "Will the new works succeed or fail?" I have often heard my father say how this uncertainty regarding Lever Brothers' financial stability stood him in good stead, for several local landowners were anxious to sell him land "while the running was still good," and he was able in the early years to acquire additional land for the works and village at a lower price

than was the case later, when the permanence of Lever Brothers had ceased to be open to doubt. But although the land was bought at reasonable prices in the first instance, considerable expenditure was necessary before it could be developed. Branching from the tidal creek up which the barges came were two other marshy ravines. All evidence of one of them has now entirely disappeared, except in the name of the village hostelry, the Bridge Inn. Originally, this creek took a northerly course and then divided, one branch reaching to where the Cottage Hospital now stands, the other winding its way for a short distance in a westerly direction. To commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1897, a stone bridge was thrown across the former branch, the ceremony of opening the bridge being performed by Sir George A. Reid, who was at that time Prime Minister of New South Wales. The latter branch was filled in at one end, and then drained and planted with trees to form what is now "The Dell."

On May 27th, 1890, Lever Brothers was converted into a private limited company, Lever holding most of the shares and his brother the remainder. But the growth of the business, not only in the United Kingdom but also abroad, soon made further extensions imperative, and in 1891, in order to obtain the necessary capital, Lever turned over in his mind the question of floating the concern as a public company. Hearing that he was pressed for capital, a firm of company promoters wrote and offered to put a proposal before him. He called upon them in London and found their suggestion to be that a company should be formed with a capital of £600,000, of which £200,000 would be in 5 per cent. Debentures, £200,000 in 6 per cent. Preference shares, and the remainder in Ordinary shares. One-third of the shares was to be retained by Lever and his brother and two-thirds offered to the public. The profits for the past year or two had been at the rate of fifty thousand pounds a year, and the company promoter saw no difficulty in disposing of the shares on terms which were certainly tempting to the proprietors. Lever, however, felt very seriously the responsibility of offering, at a premium, Ordinary shares in a business which, although it had made a most promising start, had been in existence only a few years and depended for its success on the popularity of one proprietary brand only. He explained the position to the com-

pany promoter, pointing out that the success of the scheme depended upon whether the present rate of profits could be maintained, and told him that he felt considerable hesitation in asking the public to apply for shares, more particularly Ordinary shares, as long as the slightest doubt existed. "What does it matter to you, when once you have got the money?" said the man. That was sufficient! Lever gathered up his papers and withdrew. Unknowingly, the company promoter had determined him upon the future financial policy of Lever Brothers—whatever risk there was attaching to the Ordinary shares should be primarily his. When the public company was formed three years later the Ordinary shares were privately held, and this policy he never departed from. While there is little doubt that the company could have been successfully launched on the lines of the company promoter's suggestion, it would never, under these conditions, have grown in the way it did, for with the Ordinary shares under his own control Lever was able to embark upon enterprises and developments at home and overseas which would have been impossible under any other arrangement.

Ever since he had been in business Lever had been studying the problem of profit-sharing and reading such books on the subject as were available. Although his greatest personal contribution to the problem—the Co-partnership Trust in Lever Brothers, Ltd.—was not evolved and instituted until twenty years later, his determination to put into practice some better system of relationship between employer and employed took shape in his mind about the time he left Warrington for Port Sunlight. His approach to the problem was along the lines of certain simple questions which he asked himself regarding the two businesses with which he had been connected. How did such an oft-quoted phrase as "Labour is the source of all wealth" stand in the light of his own experiences? There had been two such, the first at Wigan, the second at Warrington. In each case he had taken over a business which was losing money, and had succeeded in turning the losses into profits. In both instances the staff had remained the same. At neither establishment had he dispensed with any of the employees or reduced their wages—in fact, the reverse had been the case. The staffs had been no more reasonably entitled to credit for producing the profits than they had been entitled to blame for producing losses under the old regimes, nor had the

introduction of fresh capital into the two concerns been responsible, for in each case he had started with only slender reserves of that commodity and with certainly no more funds at his disposal than the original proprietors had had. From these standpoints, therefore, there seemed no reason why he should not regard himself as fully entitled to all the profits which accrued, since the only fresh factor in the two businesses had been himself. It had been his own energy and the new ideas he introduced which had made the difference. This way of looking at the matter, however, did not satisfy him, for the idea of an employer paying a workman a wage, however adequate that wage might be, and allowing his responsibilities to end there, never appealed to him. His study of profit-sharing schemes, most of which had up to that time ended in failure, led him to the conclusion that the majority were unsound, and this was particularly so in the classical case of the profit-sharing system introduced by Leclaire in Paris in 1842. Leclaire is generally known as the "father" of profit-sharing, although there were one or two experiments prior to the introduction of his scheme. Leclaire's was a house-painting and decorating business, and for thirty-two years he conducted it successfully on a profit-sharing basis. After his death, the shares were divided equally between the employees and the proprietors who succeeded him, but the profits were purposely inflated by his successors beyond the limit of prudence and, ten years later, the workers were receiving nearly three times as large a bonus as during the last year of Leclaire's life. Conducted on these lines the business could not stand up to its competitors, and failure was inevitable. It was clear to Lever that the secret of the initial success of the Leclaire experiment had been Leclaire himself. A profit-sharing scheme to be permanent had, therefore, in Lever's opinion, to rest on some basis which would be independent of any one individual, nor could he shut his eyes to the fact that to be scientifically sound a profit-sharing scheme had to hold good whether the profits were plus or minus, and that obviously no workman could exist through a year in which the business made losses if a profit-sharing scheme were substituted in place of wages. There was also the important point that merely to add to a workman's wages by means of an annual bonus was no solution to the greater part of the industrial problem. The provision of better conditions of employment, of houses and

social amenities, were far more pressing considerations. Lever's first experiment in profit-sharing, therefore, took the form of what he termed "prosperity-sharing"—the building of the village of Port Sunlight.

The opening of Port Sunlight was celebrated in the summer of 1890 by an excursion to Beaumaris, on which occasion Lever made a speech, of which it is interesting to recall portions, to show the direction in which his mind was working at the time when Port Sunlight was founded.

"I have been reading," he said, "Stanley's book on Africa, and there is a sentence in that book which to my mind is exceedingly applicable to us to-day. Stanley said. 'When a mission is entrusted to me and my conscience approves it as noble and right, and I give my promise to exert my best powers to fulfil this according to the letter and spirit, I carry with me a law that I am compelled to obey. If any associated with me prove to me by their manner and action that this law is equally incumbent on them, then I recognize my brothers.'"

Little did the speaker realize when he quoted Stanley's words that he himself was one day to do more than any other single man for the commercial development of that darkest part of Africa which is associated with the great explorer's name, the Belgian Congo.

"There is one point to which I have given a good deal of thought, and that is the question of profit-sharing. I have looked into the history of other firms to see what success has attended profit-sharing where it has been tried. I am sorry to say that I can find not a single instance where it has proved a success. Profit-sharing must be mutual and not a scheme to benefit the masters at the expense of the men, nor, on the other hand, must it give the men an advantage over their masters. We must remember that there is no sentiment in business, and no room for any fads. Any arrangement that is made must benefit the masters as well as the men, or it will not last. If it did last, it would be a species of charity which no working man would care to have. The way it can be made a success is by the workers making the profits larger, and that can be done by improving the quality of your service, avoiding waste, and conscientious dispatch of your duties. Profits can be increased by economy of working and extension of trade. Our idea, before we took the land at Port Sunlight, was that profit-sharing should be so managed that those who take the profits are those who are working at the works, and what we propose to do with the proportion of profit devoted to the workers is to apply it to the building of houses to be let at a reduced rental. We propose that those who have been longest in our service

should have the greatest claim. We desire to encourage permanency in the people around us, and we consider that by these arrangements the profits which are to be shared will always remain with the workers for the time being and not be divided up and squandered."

The earliest village institution to make its appearance was a men's dining-room and recreation hall. Lever was a great admirer of Mr. Gladstone and invited him to open the new building, which he proposed to call "The Gladstone Hall." The ceremony took place on November 28th, 1891. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, accompanied by the Rev. Harry and Mrs. Drew, came over by train from Hawarden in the morning, and were entertained to luncheon by Mr. Edward Evans, jun., and Mrs. Evans (afterwards Sir Edward and Lady Evans) at Spital Old Hall. After luncheon Mr. Gladstone received a deputation from the local Liberal Association, and the party then went to Port Sunlight, Lever and his father driving with Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone. On their arrival, Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone each planted a fir-tree in the garden surrounding the new hall, and James Lever then handed to Mr. Gladstone a gold key, and the building was formally declared open. At the meeting inside the Hall, which followed, Lever referred to the honour which had been conferred upon Port Sunlight that day.

"There is," he said, turning to Mr. Gladstone, "a peculiar fitness in your visit, for no trade in the country owes so much to yourself as the industry we are engaged in. It was in April 1853 that you removed the duty on soap, and thereby made the manufacture on a large and scientific scale possible. It was in 1861 that you removed the duty from paper, and so gave to the country its greatest boon, a free and cheap Press. With a duty on paper, a cheap Press was impossible, and therefore also a large circulation. Without a large circulation it would be useless to advertise, and whilst at present this art is little understood, and often looked at askance as something that is undignified and appertaining to the charlatan, the Press, next to duty-free paper, owes most to the advertisers, and the day is coming when advertising will take its place as a useful and beneficial art, and when it will be recognized that it is a necessity, in continuous, persistent and successful advertising, that the quality of the articles advertised be irreproachable."

In the course of his reply, Mr. Gladstone spoke of the new spirit which was apparent in industry and which was evidenced in the building which he had that day opened.

"A very powerful writer," he said, "whose name has become widely known, especially since his death—I mean Mr. Carlyle—in one of those robust and penetrating phrases of which he was a greater master than any other English author of the nineteenth century—said we were approaching a period when cash payment was to be the only nexus, the only link, between man and man. In this hall I have found a living proof that cash payment is not the only nexus between man and man. . . . I cannot but think that this day must be for you and your brother a happy day, a day for the heart to bound within the breast, a day to inspire great thankfulness for the past, more hopefulness for the future."

This meeting with Mr. Gladstone had a great effect upon my father, and, in recalling it years afterwards, he said, "I could not sleep much that night; I had to walk up and down the park thinking of him. He made an extraordinary impression."

CHAPTER IX

EARLY JOURNEYINGS

ONE of the most striking features of Lever Brothers' growth has been the way in which its ramifications have spread to every country in the world, with factories in the Dominions and principal European countries, as well as in the United States of America and elsewhere. In order to obtain a true perspective of Lord Leverhulme's life it is important to realize that these enterprises overseas were not embarked upon after his business at home had reached maturity, but that they date back to the year in which Port Sunlight was founded. They began as export agencies and were turned one by one into manufacturing companies as the trade in the various countries reached a point which justified the building of a factory.

Comparison has often been made between the business careers of Leverhulme and Henry Ford. There are many aspects in common, but one of the chief points of difference lies in the fact that, whereas Ford is primarily an engineer and has devoted his main energies to the technical side of his business, Leverhulme's genius lay rather in the fields of selling and advertising, and on these he concentrated, leaving the manufacturing side largely to others.

"If I had concentrated on both sides at Port Sunlight," he once wrote to me, "I could not have spread the sale of our product beyond the United Kingdom, and we get enormous strength on the selling side in England by our knowledge of selling and advertising in overseas countries, especially in the United States. I owe much more than I can ever tell to the fact that thirty-five years ago, namely in December 1888, I began to open up overseas businesses. It reminds me of the quotation, 'What should they know of England who only England know?'"

Lever's first visit to America was in September 1888, when the works at Port Sunlight were only in process of erection. He made this journey—covering altogether 15,000 miles—with his brother-in-law and great friend, W. F. Tillotson. The object of the visit was to arrange for agencies and to gain some

idea of American selling and advertising methods, for, even then, advertising was taken more seriously in America, both by manufacturers and consumers, than it was in England. Although the visit was almost entirely a business one, the two friends saw as much of the country as time and opportunity permitted. At Montreal Lever looked up his old friend of boyhood's days, Alfred Robinson, who had settled there a few years previously, and offered him Lever Brothers' agency for Canada, and Robinson promised to think it over. From Montreal Lever and his companion travelled on the Canadian Pacific Railway through Winnipeg and the Rockies to Vancouver, from which port they sailed to Seattle and continued their journey by train to Portland (Oregon) and San Francisco. From there they made their way eastwards through Salt Lake City, St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, Washington and Philadelphia. Alfred Robinson met Lever on his return to New York and accepted the appointment in Canada, and after a visit to Warrington, returned to Montreal to open an office there which, a few years later, was transferred to Toronto. A foothold was thus gained in Canada.

At the end of 1890 Lever again crossed the Atlantic, devoting his attention almost exclusively to Canada. Progress had not been as rapid as he had hoped, and several years of patient concentration were necessary before his business became firmly established in the Dominion.

In the winter of 1891–2 Mr. and Mrs. Lever spent a six-weeks' holiday in the South of France and Egypt, leaving England three days after the opening of the Gladstone Hall. When in Monte Carlo they strolled into the Casino after dinner, intending to try their luck, but ended by being onlookers only.

> "It appeared," Lever wrote in his diary, "such an utterly foolish waste of money and such an absolute certainty that we should lose it. The best sport was to watch the people—young and old, rich and poor, good, bad and indifferent—all gathered together. The nervous twitching of the faces of some who were evidently making the game a matter of the most serious importance to them; the lightness of others who cared little whether they won or lost, and the stony stare of the old habitué—all a grand study of human nature."

He was delighted with Cairo, its bazaars, its jostling crowds, its wealth of Oriental colour; nor was he content to take the traveller's passing glimpse at the surface only, but by reading

and inquiry studied as much as he could of the lives and customs of the people. With many of the ethical values of Mohammedanism he was much impressed, and he spoke of the waste of energy on the part of Christian missionaries in attempting to convert Mohammedans.

> "It appears clearer than ever," his diary states, "that the money spent on missionary efforts is worse than wasted; that the same money spent in taking the little children out of the gutters in England, feeding, clothing and educating them decently until they are fifteen, then putting them in respectable service or the Colonies, would do ten thousand times more good."

From Cairo Mr. and Mrs. Lever went up the Nile to Assouan in one of Cook's steamers. The pleasures of this journey were not all found in the wonderful places they saw, but were greatly added to by the humours of their dragoman and the eccentricities of their fellow-passengers, including an impressionable Frenchman, who, one night, being kept awake by the grating of the boat against the wharf to which she was tied, tried on his own account to loosen the rope and so give the boat more play, which nearly resulted in her being swept down the river. On their return to Cairo Mr. and Mrs. Lever went by train to Alexandria, from there sailing to Brindisi, and on the way home visited Rome. The holiday had, inevitably, its brief interludes of business—agents to be interviewed and correspondence to be dealt with—but in the main it was a holiday pure and simple, and it remained—in Lever's own words—"a delightful memory and a theme for conversation for long to come."

Lever's first voyage round the world was made in the autumn of 1892. His wife accompanied him, and they took with them their small son—the present writer—who was then four and a half years old, and Mrs. Lever's companion-housekeeper, Miss Green. Miss Green was housekeeper at Thornton Manor for twenty-nine years, and I welcome this opportunity of paying a tribute of affection to her memory and the devoted service which she rendered to my parents. The party sailed on the White Star liner *Germanic* for New York in September, and the tour included the United States, Canada, the Sandwich Islands, Samoa, New Zealand and Australia, the homeward voyage being

made via Ceylon, the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean. The trip was primarily and essentially a business one, but more time was devoted to sight-seeing than was the case during later journeys. In the course of this voyage Lever contributed to the *Birkenhead News* a series of descriptive articles which he published later in book-form under the title of *Following the Flag*. The book deals only briefly with America and Canada, but contains a vivid description of Honolulu and the Sandwich Islands, the inhabitants and their customs and the wonderful volcanoes of Kilauea and Halemoumou, and also of New Zealand, and particularly of the hot springs at Wairakei and the volcano of Mount Tarawera, which six years previously had destroyed the famous Pink and White Terraces. The concluding part of the book, dealing with Australia, is mainly political. Earlier in 1892 Lever had contested Birkenhead in the Liberal interest, and as these jottings were contributed to a Liberal newspaper, it is not unnatural that he was at some pains to show how Liberal policies, such as the Land Tax, "One Man, One Vote," and so on, had proved satisfactory in Australia.

It was during this journey that land was secured in Toronto for the future Canadian works. At that time Canadian cities were vying with each other to attract new capital and industries and it was not uncommon for a corporation to grant exemption from taxation for a term of years as an inducement to a manufacturer to select a particular town for his plant. When Lever met the Mayor and Aldermen of Toronto in order to submit his proposal for acquiring the site on which the Canadian factory of Lever Brothers now stands, the question of a possible concession with regard to taxation was mentioned to him. "Will you give the same exemption to John Taylor?" he inquired, John Taylor being a Canadian soap-maker with works in the same vicinity. They replied that it was unnecessary as Taylor was already established. "Then I do not ask," said Lever, "and will not accept any favours or advantages that will not be equally shared in by other Toronto soap-makers. All I want to know is the approximate amount of my taxes for the next ten years, and whether the Council will put in a condition fit for public use the street leading to our works." The Mayor spoke in appreciation of Lever's frank speech, and the purchase was eventually completed.

Honolulu filled Lever with wonder, as it does every traveller who lands there after leaving the fevered hustle and bustle of the United States. "The eighteen days we passed in the Sandwich Islands will always be a happy memory," he wrote in *Following the Flag*. "When one sees for the first time rare tropical plants, such as in England are reared with difficulty in hot-houses, growing in wild profusion in cottage gardens, in the fields and by the roadside, one feels removed to a new planet and a new world." With the up-to-dateness of the town of Honolulu he was much impressed. "We found there every sign of modern civilization," he wrote, "even that latest product of the age, 'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay,' and after we heard it yelled by a South Sea Islander's child, we were prepared for anything and surprised at nothing." In New Zealand, in a pretty Maori village, he met a venerable, tattooed aborigine known as "The Bone Scraper." The story was well authenticated of how fifty-seven years earlier he had helped to kill and eat a party of white men on the spot where the village stood. The Bone Scraper is virtually the Maori undertaker, for after a Maori dies the body is buried for two years and then dug up; the flesh is scraped off the bones, which are then deposited on the tops of certain high mountains, the exact spot being known only to the particular tribe concerned.

Lever had already sent to Australia a member of the Home Staff, Mr. J. Proctor Gray, who met the party at Auckland on their arrival and remained with them during their stay in New Zealand and Australia. Of J. P. Gray, the pioneer for Lever Brothers in Australia, Lever always spoke in the warmest terms. In addition to being an able man of business, Gray took a considerable interest in public affairs, and he was eventually appointed a member of the New South Wales Senate.

Amongst the passengers who joined Lever's homeward-bound ship, the P. & O. liner *Australia*, at Colombo was Lord Curzon, then the Hon. George Nathaniel Curzon, Member of Parliament for Southport. One day a debate was arranged in the smoke-room on the subject of Free Trade and Protection between Lever, who championed Free Trade, and the Hon. L. L. Smith, of Melbourne, with whom Mr. and Mrs. Lever had visited Kandy when the ship called at Colombo. Curzon took

the chair, and the following account of the debate is given in Lever's diary :—

"Debate with Mr. Smith carried on, Hon. George Curzon in the chair—bright and clever chairman he made—professed himself as undecided about Protection and Free Trade—a 'mug-wump,' he said—but stated that Protection was impossible in England with large populations in the cities to be fed. He will undoubtedly become a bright and shining light in the Conservative Party. Result of debate was for Free Trade 47—for Protection 17."

Another interesting personality on board was John Cook, the sole partner of Thomas Cook & Son, the tourist agents. "I have had many conversations with him," Lever wrote. "He is a particularly shrewd man, keen and strong."

In October 1894 Lever paid another visit to the United States and Canada, accompanied by his sisters, Mrs. Bromiley and Mrs. Ferguson. The record in his diary of the outward voyage is enlivened by an almost incredible story of an American lady on board who, in all seriousness, told him how surprised she was, when visiting Venice, to find all the important streets flooded and the people going about in boats! After reaching New York Lever went immediately to Canada, and then to the Southern States. While there he visited a cotton plantation and was shown over several cotton-seed oil mills, and bought, on behalf of Lever Brothers, a mill at Vicksburg. He went carefully into the working costs of the mill and appointed as manager a Colonel Streuby, who had lost a leg in the Civil War and who was an expert in seed-crushing. At Vicksburg Lever was again able to convert an unprofitable business into a profitable one, and the undertaking was carried on for about ten years, when it was sold, as oil mills had, in the meantime, been established at Port Sunlight.

While at Little Rock, in Arkansas State, Lever was taken over a cotton plantation some twelve miles away. He stayed for a night on the plantation, and after dinner took part in a coon (opossum) hunt, a most interesting experience, of which the following description is given in a letter to his wife :—

"We went coon hunting on the Thursday night, and were out shooting quails and wild duck all Friday, but the coon hunting was the most fun. We left the plantation at nine o'clock on Thursday night, all of us (six) on horseback and with a party of niggers and dogs. We

rode four miles into a thick forest. It was moonlight, and whilst that made it nicer for us, it made it worse to catch the coons because they won't take to the trees. The result was that although we chased a score at least, we did not get one; but the sport was all the same. We lit immense bonfires in the woods at two resting-places; altogether it was the most weird experience I ever had. We got back to the plantation at two in the morning."

It was on his return to New York that the final negotiations for the purchase of the Vicksburg mill took place with the vendors' solicitors. His own American lawyers were greatly impressed and not a little surprised at the rapidity with which Lever completed the transaction, and at the confidence which he placed in people about whom he had had no opportunity of making any searching inquiries. The reply he gave was characteristic. "First, Mr. Streuby is a man of unblemished character with thirty-five years' good references, introduced to us by a firm whom we trust. Secondly, you yourselves are the leading solicitors in New York, introduced by my own solicitor in London, and I trust you. The result is that I can do the business in a few hours and sail for home, whereas, without the above conditions, even if I gave months to it, I should be robbed."

At the end of November he was home in England, but four months later he again crossed the Atlantic, taking with him his son (then seven years of age) and his nephew and niece, Lever and Mary Tillotson. The greater part of their time was spent in the Southern States, and, when on the Mississippi, they had the good fortune to witness a "silver" sunset, a rare occurrence which an American fellow-passenger declared he had never seen for thirty years. "The sun went down," Lever wrote, "and instead of a blaze of red, it was a blaze of silver, just like a full moon. The sun was silver, the clouds were tipped with silver, and so was the river. The effect was most peculiar, and it was very beautiful. We had never heard of silver sunsets before, and this one was the greater wonder to us." Vicksburg he described as "a city which, like Mrs. Gummidge, has seen better days." It had witnessed hard fighting during the Civil War, and after being five times besieged, had come to be considered almost impregnable, until at last it fell to the victorious General Grant; and it was on account of the terms which he

exacted from the town that he earned for himself the title of "Unconditional Surrender Grant." "Vicksburg of to-day," Lever wrote in one of his letters, "is dull and sluggish. She appears to have had the life ground out of her as she lies between the upper and lower millstones of Memphis and New Orleans. The town is, however, a good centre for an oil mill, being in the very heart of the Mississippi and Yazzo valleys cotton plantations." He was much impressed with the wonderful way in which the Mississippi boats were navigated.

"The real captain is the pilot," he wrote. "It is he who decides everything connected with the navigation of the boat. We passed an afternoon in the pilot's box, and had a pleasant chat with him whenever opportunity afforded; he claimed that he knew Mark Twain well, and had often worked turns with him as pilot. We thought we would ask what sort of a man Mark Twain was. 'Wall, stranger, he was a fairish enough sort of man for a pilot, though he was no great shakes at that, but as to writing books, none of us ever thought he had that much in him.' Clearly the Mississippi pilot could not understand how his old mate had made such a reputation for himself. We inquired what was the meaning of 'Mark Twain' and found it meant 'twelve feet,' and is used by the man who throws the lead to signalize that there is only twelve feet of water. Other signs are 'Quarter Twain,' 'Half Twain,' and so on."

At Vicksburg Lever found that good progress had been made with the mill, and he purchased additional land and arranged for extensions to be made. The journey back to New York, as the writer well remembers, was a chapter of accidents. First of all his son's hat blew off during a halt at a wayside station, and while Lever was recovering it the train began to move. In dashing after it he tripped over some barbed wire and tore his clothes, but just managed to scramble on board. A little later the firebox fell out of the locomotive, causing a delay of two hours. Then a goods train ahead of their own met with an accident in which two men were killed, and the consequent blocking of the line caused a delay which resulted in all the connections being missed. Lastly, on entering Philadelphia, their train crashed into a waggon at a level crossing, killing two horses outright and injuring the driver so seriously that he was not expected to recover. Eventually they reached New York over twenty-four hours late.

Lever had already sent to New York Mr. A. J. Wolfendale, who, after being with him at Wigan, had become Lever Brothers' Advertising Manager, and it was during this visit that Lever opened the firm's first New York office. Two years later Mr. Stillman F. Kelly and Mr. Edwin D. Mellen, who each owned a half interest in the Curtis Davis Company, a firm of soap-manufacturers in Cambridge, Massachusetts, offered to sell the concern to Lever Brothers. In 1897 Lever was again in America, and negotiations were then completed whereby Lever Brothers acquired three-fifths of the shares of the Curtis Davis Company. After Lever Brothers had acquired these shares a corporation was formed under the name of the Curtis Davis Corporation, with Kelly as president and Mellen as treasurer. In 1899 the latter resigned through ill-health, and the New York office of Lever Brothers was then closed and the entire business in the United States transferred to Cambridge. The name of the Company was changed from Curtis Davis to "Lever Brothers, Limited, Boston Works," and Wolfendale was placed in charge. The year 1901 found Lever once more in America in company with his nephew and colleague, John Lever Tillotson, the eldest son of W. F. Tillotson, and offices were again opened in New York. In the meantime Lever Brothers had acquired the business and plant of Benjamin Brooke & Co., in Philadelphia, the manufacturers of the well-known "Monkey Brand" soap, a product which had met with great success in the United Kingdom but had only a small sale in the States. The manufacture of "Monkey Brand" for the British market was, therefore, transferred to Port Sunlight, and the works at Philadelphia were used to relieve the pressure on the Cambridge plant. At the same time Lever Brothers' business in America was reconstructed, the name being changed to its present one of "Lever Brothers Company," and a number of the most successful sales representatives in England were sent out to develop the trade, amongst them Mr. Angus Watson, who, a little later, left the firm in order to establish a business in connection with the importation of canned goods from Norway, in which he achieved a great success with "Skipper" sardines, or brisling.

In 1902 Lever paid another visit to America, during which he met President Roosevelt. A letter to myself, which I received

when home from Eton for the summer holidays, describes the interview as follows :—

"Yesterday I had to go for an introduction to the President of the United States, Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Senator Conger took me. We left New York at 8.30, took the boat and train to Oyster Bay, where the President lives when not at Washington or away on visits—arrived at the President's house at eleven o'clock. The President was out riding on horseback, but returned in a few minutes. He wore a riding suit, jackboots, spurs and a slouch hat—looked the very picture of the brave, strong man he is. I was introduced to him, and we had a short chat. He took me in his house to his library, and asked if I smoked, but I told him I did not."

During the same visit Lever was the chief guest at a dinner of the Sphinx Club of New York, the leading advertising club in America, and chose as the subject of his speech "The Cosmopolitanism of Proprietary Articles." "Proprietary articles," he said, "are the great harbingers of the universal exchange of goods between nations . . . a proprietary article laughs at tariffs as love laughs at locksmiths."

In 1904 the New York office and Philadelphia works of Lever Brothers were closed and the entire business transferred to Cambridge under the presidency of Alexander Whyte, who had been secretary of Lever Brothers, Ltd., at Port Sunlight. Whyte left America in 1908, and the presidency was given to Wolfendale, who, four years later, returned to England and was succeeded by his assistant and right-hand man, Francis A. Countway, the present president of the Company.

The progress of Lever Brothers in America was in the earlier years slow and disappointing. "It is the biggest undertaking I ever had on hand and I fancy it has depressed me," Lever wrote to his father from New York on March 17th, 1895: "I should hate to face a failure here, and we have to run the risk—however, I hope it will be a success, as big as in England." In another letter he spoke of the task before him in America as his "Battle of the Nile." For many years he looked upon the small Cambridge works as giving him little more than a foothold in the States, but success beyond all earlier hopes came later, under the able presidency of F. A. Countway, when various products which Lever had originated and established in England and other parts of the world were launched on the American

market. In thus completing in brief outline the story of Lever Brothers in America I am, however, trespassing beyond the period with which this chapter is, strictly speaking, concerned. I must now turn to my father's second long voyage abroad.

In September 1895 Lever, with his wife and son and his widowed sister (Mrs. Bromiley) and Miss Green, sailed on board the *Tantallon Castle* for South Africa. While the business of Lever Brothers was the main object of this visit, he was anxious to see something of the diamond and gold mines, romantic stories of which were on every one's lips. Before leaving England, therefore, he had obtained from the British South Africa Company a letter of introduction to Cecil Rhodes, for which he was indebted to his friend, Ernest Cooper, the principal partner and founder of Cooper Brothers & Co., the well-known chartered accountants, who were his firm's auditors and in whose office the British South Africa Company had been originally inaugurated.

The *Tantallon Castle* entered Table Bay on a bright, clear spring morning as the "Tablecloth"—the white clouds which so frequently envelop Table Mountain in the early morning—was lifting. The party stayed two days in Cape Town, during which Lever took the opportunity of calling upon Cecil Rhodes at Rondebosch. The interview was brief, but he records in his diary how deeply impressed he was with the strength of character so evident in Rhodes's features. He presented his letter of introduction, and Rhodes gave him a note to the manager of the De Beers diamond mines at Kimberley. Cecil Rhodes, nearly two years younger than Lever, was then one of the best-known and most discussed men in the Empire, while Lever had yet to become a national figure. In later years the one has often been likened to the other, and in many ways their characters and achievements were similar. Courage, organizing ability and breadth of vision were their outstanding qualities, and each did a great work for Africa, the one politically by extending the British Empire, the other industrially by developing the resources of the Belgian Congo and the trade of British West Africa. Although in the politics of the day they were in different camps, the eyes of both looked to a horizon beyond the divisions of parties. The one might be called a Liberal-minded Imperialist and the other an Imperial-minded Liberal.

Mrs. Lever, with her son, remained behind in Cape Town while her husband went with his sister to the Transvaal. After a journey of two days and nights in the train, during which they had the interesting experience of encountering a flight of locusts which beat against the carriage windows, they reached Kimberley, and without delay made use of the letter of introduction to the De Beers Company. Lever was anxious to take home a few uncut diamonds as a souvenir of his visit.

"We proceeded to buy them with a light heart," he wrote, "little thinking the awful responsibility we incurred by purchasing diamonds in South Africa. The first shock we received was to find that before we were allowed even to purchase at all we must get a permit from the magistrate. Armed with this imposing-looking document, we thought our trouble over, but soon found out our mistake. We next had to take out a licence and pay a Government duty permitting us to remove the diamonds after we had purchased them. Finally we had to be careful to obtain a duly receipted bill for the diamonds purchased, describing their number and weight. Armed with these three documents we breathed freely again, and felt quite safe to proceed on our way to Johannesburg. But our troubles were only just beginning. We arrived at Johannesburg and passed our baggage through the Customs House of the South African Republic, and had barely done so when an official came up in a great state of excitement and asked if we had any diamonds. 'Yes,' I immediately replied. A detective officer was sent for, and we were treated as specimens of the hardened criminal attempting to evade the strong arm of the law. We produced our papers, which the detective examined, and, declaring them to be in order, at once retired, but not so the Customs House officer; with an utter disregard for logic he declared we were liable to pay five times something or other because we had not told him we had diamonds before he asked us. It was useless to insist on the absurdity of this and to point out that we had told him as soon as he had ordered us. He was a little pompous individual, greatly impressed with his own importance and that of the South African Republic, and therefore our ignorance of the laws and customs of this Boer State appeared to him very like adding insult to injury. He carried the case before the public prosecutor, who, being, fortunately, a more rational human being, was soon satisfied with our *bona fides*, and wrote out an order for the diamonds to be restored to us on payment of the ordinary duty. Our ideas on the subject of the purchase of diamonds in South Africa and the awful responsibility it entails are now considerably enlarged and developed."

After a few days in Johannesburg, during which they visited one of the gold mines on the Rand, Lever and his sister continued their journey to Natal. The railway, although just completed,

had not yet been opened and they had to go by coach to Standaston, a distance of ninety-four miles, and take the train from there to Durban. The coach was a great lumbering vehicle, not unlike a stage coach in design, but longer, with four rows of seats inside holding twelve passengers and with accommodation for six passengers outside. It was drawn by a team of ten horses, which were changed every nine or ten miles. "The Boer driver," Lever wrote, "sat on the box-seat armed with a long whip, with which he is fabled to be able to knock a fly from off the leader's ear with the greatest ease." At Durban they picked up the *Tantallon Castle* on her homeward voyage, but left her at East London and went by train to King William's Town, and from there by mail-cart to Grahamstown, a distance of eighty-four miles. From there they went by train to Cape Town, where they joined the remainder of their party and left in the steamship *Ionic* for Hobart, Tasmania.

The Australian trade was not yet ripe for the building of a factory, but Lever, while in Australia, acquired a site at Balmain, Sydney, with excellent harbour frontage, where one was eventually built in 1899, and in the meantime, during this visit, he arranged to erect on part of the site a coconut-oil mill—the first oil-mill ever built south of the Equator—where copra from the South Sea Islands could be crushed, the resultant oil being shipped to England. The "first sod" was cut by Mrs. Lever in December 1895. From Australia the party returned to England through the Red Sea and Mediterranean, arriving home in February 1896. It had been Lever's intention to break the voyage at Ceylon and visit India, but while in Adelaide he received a cable announcing the illness of his brother and at once hastened home. Assiduous traveller as he was, his desire to visit India remained unfulfilled until a year before his death.

CHAPTER X

DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE

LEVER'S first business visit to the Continent was in 1888—the year of Port Sunlight's foundation. The following year he again crossed the channel, accompanied on this occasion by John Greenhalgh, the accountant who had remodelled his father's elementary book-keeping methods in Bolton, and they together visited France, Belgium and Germany, and later in the same year he visited the Paris Exhibition. It was in connection with his pioneer work on the Continent that he was brought into contact with one of the most remarkable men among his many business associates—F. H. Lavanchy-Clarke. Lavanchy-Clarke was a Swiss ; his original name was Lavanchy, but he added the name of Clarke on marrying an Englishwoman of that name. As a youth he spent a great deal of his time in Egypt, where he made a study of Egyptology and Arabic, very often dressing and living as an Arab. As a young man he became interested in the cause of the blind, and it was at Cairo, after the Franco-Prussian War, that he first started an institution for them. In 1873 he was appointed as an Egyptian delegate at the Vienna Congress for the Blind. Five years later he was the principal promoter of the "Congrès Internationale pour l'Amélioration du sort des Aveugles" held in Paris, at which it was decided, at his suggestion, that the Braille system of writing and reading for the blind should be universally adopted. In 1881 he founded "La Société des Ateliers d'Aveugles" and opened the first workshop in Paris for the adult blind, where he taught them to make brushes and cane chairs. Lavanchy-Clarke had a wonderfully ingenious and inventive mind and a *flair* for advertising. In 1888 he commenced a "penny-in-the-slot" concern—"*les distributeurs automatiques*" as it was called—a part of the profits from which he devoted to the upkeep of his workshops for the blind. In the same year he came to London in search of people who might buy these machines for advertising purposes, and he was quick to notice the Sunlight Soap adver-

tisements, which were then becoming more and more numerous, and through a friend he obtained an introduction to Lever.

One Saturday afternoon, when Lever had stayed late at Warrington in order to go round the factory by himself after the work of the week had ended, he saw a stranger enter the works yard and look about him as if he were seeking someone to speak to. The stranger at once compelled attention; he was unusually tall and possessed a leonine head—crowned with a wide-brimmed hat—a strong profile and aquiline nose; but perhaps the most remarkable thing about him was his wealth of long, dark hair, brushed back from his temples and overhanging his collar. Lever spoke to the stranger, who was surprised to find himself in the presence of the proprietor of the business, not expecting to encounter him in this unconventional way. The visitor stated the object of his call, and, seated on two upturned packing-cases, they had a conversation which led to his accepting an appointment with Lever Brothers in France to undertake, in the first place, the arrangement of some special advertising at the Paris Exhibition of 1889. Such was the first meeting between Lever and Lavanchy-Clarke.

In addition to his publicity work in France, Lavanchy-Clarke was the pioneer for Lever Brothers in his native country of Switzerland. He called upon all the leading grocers in Lausanne, Geneva and the other principal Swiss towns, but the first results were disappointing. It was then that his picturesque imagination and *flair* for advertising came into full play. He organized on Easter Monday of 1889 a washing competition on the Lake of Geneva, calling it the "Fête des Blanchisseuses." All the washerwomen from the different towns on the lake were invited, and two of the largest steamers were chartered to take them to the rendezvous, and afterwards a banquet was served to the competitors. In those days such an event had never been heard of before and crowds flocked to see it. Vivid accounts appeared in all the Swiss newspapers, and references were also made to it in the Press of Europe and America. The success was beyond even Lavanchy-Clarke's optimistic imagination, and without delay an office was opened in Lausanne.

Lever visited Switzerland several times during the 'nineties. In August of 1897 he took his wife and son with him and found time for a tour of the Rhône Valley, and in the following January

he made another journey there. By this time the trade had grown sufficiently to justify the building of a works, and the necessity for a local factory was increased by the difficulties which Lavanchy-Clarke was having with the Swiss Customs authorities. Various sites were inspected, and Olten was finally chosen as the most suitable centre for manufacturing, and the "Savonneries Helvetia," the first overseas offspring of the parent company, was opened by Lever on the 12th of October, 1898, the ceremony of starting the machinery being performed by Lavanchy-Clarke's small daughter, Christine. The increased import duty imposed by the Swiss Government was not the only factor which influenced Lever in building these works. "The Swiss Customs duties have not been the great barrier," he said, in his speech at the opening ceremony; "Customs duties never are. The most serious obstacle to international trade in manufactured articles is the great difficulty—I might almost say the impossibility—while living in one country, of appreciating the tastes and requirements of another. The slightest variation of the simplest detail often means all the difference between success and failure. It is not within the range of man's ability to train up in one country a staff capable of dealing perfectly with all the details of a business in another."

In passing, it is of interest to recall Lavanchy-Clarke's association with the earliest developments of the cinematograph. As in the case of the penny-in-the-slot machine, its novelty and ingeniousness at once appealed to him, and he acquired certain exclusive rights in connection with the first moving-picture machine made, I believe, by Lumiere père, of Lyons, and used one for advertising at the Geneva Exhibition. Lever visited the Exhibition and bought one or two of the machines for advertising on the London hoardings. An opening was cut in the hoarding and a screen inserted, the operator working his machine from the back. The crowds that gathered during the evenings were, however, so great—the idea being a complete novelty—that the authorities stopped the showing of the pictures within a fortnight.

In writing of these early visits to Europe, when the seeds were sown which were to grow as hopeful saplings—some sturdier than others—during the 'nineties and blossom into "Associated Companies" at the end of last century and the beginning of

this, one's thoughts naturally turn to those whom Lever chose as his "missionaries" on the Continent. If the representatives of Lever Brothers in other countries were less picturesque and original than Lavanchy-Clarke, they were his equal in industry and in personal affection for their chief. Many names might be mentioned; but two are outstanding—Mr. Ernest Brauen in Belgium and Mr. A. P. van Geelkerken in Holland. Brauen, a Belgian by nationality, had been in the firm's export office in London and, after spending a little time at the works in Warrington, had accompanied Lever to Brussels when he visited the Continent in 1888. As a result of this visit he took up his residence in Brussels and opened an office for the firm on the first floor of a building in the Place de la Bourse, from which the business was managed until the erection of a factory at Forest-Midi, a suburb of Brussels, in 1904. To begin with, progress in Belgium was slow and disappointing—so much so that at one time Lever wondered whether he would not be wise in abandoning his activities there altogether, but eventually perseverance was rewarded, and in no European country has success, once established, been more continuous. Lever's first efforts to establish a trade in France were even more disappointing than in Belgium, and the same was the case in Germany, where an office was opened at Hamburg in 1889 under the management of a brother of Ernest Brauen. In Germany Lever soon realized that he could make little impression without a works inside the country, and in 1898 he obtained a piece of land suitable for the purpose in the rapidly developing port of Mannheim on the Rhine. His inquiries for this site brought him into touch with Herr Kommerzienrat Ludwig Stollwerck and his brother, Carl Stollwerck, the well-known chocolate manufacturers of Cologne; further meetings in Germany and England followed, and Lever invited Herr Ludwig Stollwerck to take a financial interest in his German company and to become its chairman, which he did, his commercial ability and knowledge of local conditions being of the greatest help. Lever Brothers' serious entry into Germany not unnaturally aroused strong opposition from the German soap-makers, who sank their internal rivalries in a concerted effort against the invader. The fierce competition which followed the completion of the Mannheim factory in 1900 made any immediate financial success impossible,

but in 1903 the corner was turned and continuous progress marked the years which followed. In France the business of Lever Brothers was slow in developing, and it was not until the eve of the Great War that a factory was established at Lille.

Holland was the one European country where success came from the very beginning, and for this full credit must be given to the Dutchman whom Lever appointed as manager, A. P. van Geelkerken, a man who combined with an aptitude for painstaking industry and application to detail, a temperament cautious and thrifty to a degree, and remarkable even amongst a people noted for these qualities. When Lever first met him in 1888 Geelkerken was in business with his brother in London as a general commercial agent, and before this he had been for seven years the European representative of Price's Patent Candle Company. Leaving the London business in charge of his brother, he went over to Rotterdam at the end of the year and opened a small office, the furniture of which consisted of two desks, with office stools, and a second-hand safe, and the " staff " of but Geelkerken himself and an office-boy. Building upon these modest foundations Geelkerken, stimulated by frequent visits from his chief, developed the trade year by year. In 1901 the business in Holland was incorporated as a Dutch company under the title of " De Lever's Zeep Maatschappij " (Lever's Soap Company, Ltd.), but the factory, which is at Vlaardingen, was not completed until 1915.

To review the position of Lever Brothers abroad at the close of last century, twelve years after the foundation of Port Sunlight, we see that works had been established at Olten in Switzerland, at Toronto in Canada and at Mannheim in Germany. At Sydney, New South Wales, an oil-mill had been erected and a soap-works commenced. In the United States a cotton-seed mill at Vicksburg had been bought and an already existing soap plant acquired at Cambridge, Massachusetts. The business had become well established in Belgium and Holland, and to a smaller degree in France. In South Africa—then in the throes of the Boer War—a satisfactory start had been made, and the same can be said with regard to many other parts of the world to which the firm were exporting their products.

CHAPTER XI

DEVELOPMENTS AT HOME

IN writing the biography of my father, it would be impossible to record his many and varied activities in their chronological sequence without confusion to the reader. After the founding of Port Sunlight he became increasingly absorbed, not only in his business, but also in public life—as well as in his favourite relaxations, the collecting of works of art and the altering and enlarging of his homes and gardens. For convenience, therefore, and to avoid skipping confusedly from one subject to another, it is essential to place these several sides of his life to a large extent in watertight compartments. Few men have crowded a greater variety and diversity of interests into their lives than Leverhulme; his restless energy, as conspicuous in the 'nineties as in the latter part of his life, reminded one of that graphic description of the flight of time which Ralph Hodgson gives in "Time, you Old Gypsy Man":—

> Last week in Babylon,
> Last night in Rome,
> Morning, and in the crush
> Under Paul's dome;
> Under Paul's dial
> You tighten your rein—
> Only a moment,
> And off once again.

One day would find him at Port Sunlight, the next in London. How frequently he was abroad the last chapter has shown, and yet in the midst of all these business undertakings of the 'nineties he found time to fight three Parliamentary elections in Birkenhead and to attend to many other public matters, to plan the village of Port Sunlight, to purchase and almost entirely rebuild the village of Thornton Hough, to enlarge Thornton Manor, as well as to buy and to alter a house in London and one in Bolton. The last and next few chapters, therefore, march more or less side by side, as far as the passage of time is concerned.

The present chapter is confined to the growth of Lever Brothers during the first dozen years of its existence as a Public Limited Company.

We have already seen how Lever was thinking of floating Lever Brothers as a Public Company and how the inopportune remark of the company promoter, by whom he was approached, caused him, fortunately for his future career, to abandon the idea for the time being. The necessity for further capital, however, continued, and by 1894 it was clear that Lever Brothers had outgrown its speculative infancy and that the public could with confidence be invited to subscribe capital. A Public Limited Liability Company was accordingly formed in that year to take over the assets of the original private concern, Lever and his brother receiving the Ordinary shares in the new company. The commencing capital was £1,500,000, divided into 75,000 Cumulative Preference shares of £10 each and 75,000 Ordinary shares of the same value. Of the 75,000 Preference shares created, 50,000 were issued to begin with, and the prospectuses were sent out on the 26th of June. By the end of that day, applications had been received for 89,000 shares, and when the lists were closed a day or two later, the value of the applications amounted to two million pounds, or four times the amount asked for, a result which surpassed Lever's highest expectations. The first directors of the new company, under the chairmanship of William Lever, were his brother (James Darcy Lever), his father (James Lever) and Percy James Winser, who had been works manager ever since the Warrington days.

Lever's basic policy in building up the business was to progress a step at a time. He started with one product only. Not until this was established beyond dispute did he launch on the market his second proprietary article. Out of the profits of the first he introduced and advertised the second. When the second was firmly established, he commenced the manufacture of others. The policy throughout was the same—one thing at a time, each new article being launched and advertised out of the profits yielded by its predecessors.

I have already referred to the purchase by Lever Brothers of Benjamin Brooke & Co. This was the first business to be acquired by Lever Brothers, the purchase taking place at

the beginning of 1899, and as a result the manufacture of "Monkey Brand" for Great Britain was transferred to Port Sunlight, and Sydney Gross, the principal partner in Brooke's, joined the Board of Lever Brothers. As time went on Lever found himself unable to give the same detailed attention to the advertising side of the business as he had formerly given, although throughout his life he never relaxed his general control over it. Gross, on joining the Board, identified himself with the advertising department and supplied just the human touch which was necessary. There had been a time, a few years earlier, when advertising was in itself a novelty, and when merely to advertise was to attract attention. Towards the end of his life, Leverhulme frequently remarked that the day had passed when a "pretty picture" by itself could sell goods. The public, in an increasing measure, has formed the habit of reading advertisements, and people now want logical and considered arguments to convince them that one article has merits not possessed by another. Between the original "novelty" era of advertising and the present stage, to which we may apply the adjective "scientific," there was a period comprising roughly the concluding ten years of last century and the first ten years of this, in which advertisements had to be pithy, bright and original, and in which humour could be utilized with greater certainty of success than is the case to-day. Gross's mind and methods exactly suited this middle period; his temperament was one which appealed to artists, and he was a generous friend to many. The genius of Phil May particularly attracted him, and the artist frequently visited him at his home in Hampstead. He was a great believer in using humorous drawings for advertising, and under his direction, in addition to Phil May, Harry Furniss, Tom Browne, R.I., John Hassall, R.I., and many other well-known artists were commissioned by Lever Brothers. Gross's ability as an advertising man lay in the fact that not only could he create an idea, but select every time the artist most suited to the execution of it. In 1910 failing health unfortunately deprived the business of his services, and his death occurred five years later. His was one of the outstanding friendships of Lever's life, and speaking of him, after his retirement, Lever said, "Mr. Gross's life has been one of the romances of commerce. . . . I believe Mr. Gross and Mr. Barrett (the chairman of A. & F. Pears,

Ltd.) have done more between them for the cause of artistic advertising than any other men in the world."

To begin with, there were three or four Ordinary shareholders intimately associated with the business, and for some years this continued to be the case. Lever found, however, that when new ventures and expansions were proposed, the cautious hesitancy of his partners was in frequent conflict with his own courageous optimism, and as time went on he came to the conclusion that he could carry out his schemes with fuller freedom if all the Ordinary shares were in his own hands. Accordingly, as opportunities arose, he offered to the other holders Preference shares in exchange for their Ordinary shares on a basis which made them very willing to accept.

In the earliest days, when the works consisted of one Soapery only, the offices were in one corner of that building, and Lever and his brother occupied two rooms situated roughly where the Central Time Office and the Employment Bureau now stand. When the present offices were built, the Chairman's private room was originally at the back of the vestibule, and it had large glass windows at each end through which he could survey the long range of general offices on either side. In 1913, when more office accommodation was required, a third wing at right angles to the other two was built. The Chairman's old room then disappeared, and he removed to a larger and more elaborate office, with a new Board Room beneath it, at one end of the new wing. It is, however, with the old central office, with its large windows, that those who worked with Lever in the period before the War will most vividly associate him. In those days he looked upon Port Sunlight as his headquarters, and "visited" London; during and after the War London claimed an increasing proportion of his time, and he might have been said to "visit" Port Sunlight. The first London office and warehouse were at Paul's Wharf, Upper Thames Street, but shortly afterwards larger office premises were taken in Queen Victoria Street. In 1905, however, a new riverside warehouse and offices were built at Caldwell's Yard, leading from Upper Thames Street.

Lever's office at Port Sunlight was simply decorated and furnished: a mahogany writing-table, a high sloping desk against the wall, at which he often stood to look at plans or to dictate letters—he loved to work standing up and had a desk of

this pattern in all the rooms in which he worked—two private filing cabinets, a safe and a few chairs completed the furnishing. Large framed photographs of his parents and his wife hung on the wall facing his desk, and behind where he sat was a map of the British Isles, marked to show the various "sales divisions." Punctually at 8.30 each morning, sometimes earlier, he would enter the office carrying his familiar concertina-like brown bag, in which were his morning's letters and the batch of business reports which he had read the evening before, or earlier the same morning. I am not sure when this friendly bag first saw the light of day; its leather became soft and pliable with age, and it expanded to a size and shape beyond anything originally expected of it. It must have been round the world three or four times and travelled altogether a prodigious number of miles; it was often patched and mended, but its owner would never change it for another. The time for commencing office business was 8.30, and Lever was invariably down by that hour. If he saw a clerk coming in late he would never let the incident pass unnoticed, but his own personal example meant that these rebukes were seldom necessary. Officially he was always spoken of throughout the organization as "The Chairman," unofficially as "The Chief," while during the Warrington period and immediately afterwards he and his brother were colloquially referred to as "W. H." and "J. D." Unfortunately, ill-health necessitated J. D. Lever's retirement in 1897. This severance of their close partnership was a great grief to the elder brother—the first great unforeseen sorrow which befell him. William Lever had always been the dominant partner, the originator, the directing mind, the controlling force; but his brother, until illness overtook him, gave him loyal, competent and unstinted support. With an equal in dynamic energy William Lever could never have worked on the same terms of partnership as he did with his brother. While it lasted the combination had many ideal qualities, and, had it continued, it would have added still more to the happiness which my father found in business.

On his arrival at the office in the morning Lever would ring for his secretaries and first of all hand out for distribution reports and letters from directors and managers on which he had already written, generally with a red pencil, his comments or instructions. He would then go through his morning's correspondence and

dictate his replies. He had a succession of private secretaries, recruiting them generally from the staff of Lever Brothers. No one man remained a very long time in the position for the reason that, if he failed to keep up to the pace that was required, he was restored to his former position, while, if he really made good, Lever felt that he should be given some more responsible post in the business itself, for he always regarded the office of private secretary to himself as a cul-de-sac. While he could not in justice to himself keep an inefficient man, he did not wish in fairness to the man and the business to hold on too long to a good one, and this naturally led to many changes. He invariably dictated his letters to two or three lady stenographers, so that what one missed another might pick up, and he always considered that this method greatly saved his time in the long run. Where all gave of their best, comparisons are to be deprecated, but I would be guilty of a serious omission if, while referring to this portion of each day's work, I did not mention one name, that of Miss Alice Harding, whose loyalty and indefatigable service deserve the warmest tribute I can pay. Miss Harding took down his letters over a period of twenty-seven years, in his office at Port Sunlight, in his "sanctum" at Thornton Manor or at his bungalow at Rivington, while frequently, when time was precious, she would meet him or leave him at Rugby or Crewe on his way from or to London, for a London and North Western Railway carriage was almost as much an office to him as his rooms at Port Sunlight and Thornton. He had generally glanced through his morning's mail over breakfast, and he would dictate the replies at a steady conversational pace without a break or pause. If the required reply did not present itself to his mind at once, he would place the letter at the bottom of the pile and turn to the next. When he came to the letter the second time the reply seemed to come to him spontaneously; it was almost as if he worked with two minds, and, while his primary mind was answering the letter in front of him, his secondary one was subconsciously evolving replies to the letters he had relegated to the bottom of the pile. Very often when he thought that a letter or report called for a strongly worded answer he would dictate one which gave the fullest vent to his feelings and conveyed his censure in unmistakable terms, then, when it was typed, he would read it through, tear it up

PORTRAIT OF MR. W. H. LEVER BY SIR LUKE FILDES, R.A.

and dictate a milder one, which he felt would be fairer to the feelings of the recipient.

When his correspondence was finished Lever generally devoted the remainder of the morning to interviews. Those who wished to see him were expected to send in their names and also their agendas by ten o'clock, and then he telephoned for them one by one. He generally glanced through the agendas beforehand and arranged the interviews in what he considered to be the order of their importance. His familiarity with all the details of the business and the personal touch which he kept upon its daily progress enabled him to give his decisions with lightning rapidity. "What's the next?" he used to say, as he pencilled his familiar W. H. L. against the preceding item, very often before the person interviewed had given all the explanation that he felt to be necessary. I have heard a close colleague of his, with thirty years' experience in the business, say that only one who had seen him at work during this earlier period of his career could fully appreciate the high peak of mental efficiency, alertness and swiftness of decision which his brain attained to when he was in the prime of life.

Amongst those who were in daily contact with him Lever had the power of inspiring both loyalty and affection, and the personal ascendancy which he exercised in the business of Lever Brothers is probably unique in commercial history. To please him, to make good in his eyes, was the one thing which counted in the lives of those around him. If a record had been kept of his words of blame and his words of praise, it would have been found that the latter far outweighed the former. When he did censure, it was rarely in words of anger, it was more often in a tone of regret and disappointment. His criticism was so worded as to give one the feeling that he had been let down, that one had failed to do, not the difficult and complicated thing, but the simple and obvious one. His look was always a tenfold more severe rebuke than the words he spoke.

During this period, Board meetings, except for the transaction of purely formal and legal business, were hardly ever held. Each director had a particular section under his care, and was in almost daily consultation with the Chairman, who alone guided the policy of the entire business. It has been said that Lever could not work with other men except as their chief. A man, like a

mechanical instrument, has to be used in a certain way if he is to yield the best results, and Lever's strength of will and originality made him unsuited to any sphere of activity other than one in which his could be the sole deciding voice. This was one reason why, with a few isolated exceptions, he never sat upon any Board of Directors unconnected with his own business. In 1891 he was persuaded to take an interest in a new Insurance Company, and after some deliberation he accepted the position of chairman. Needless to say, he had definite and original ideas which he wished to see introduced, but as his colleagues were not all convinced that his schemes would prove successful, he felt obliged to resign a few months later. Nothing attracted him more than to put into operation new ideas. He would rather have carried on as chairman and seen his schemes fail than acquiesced in a policy dictated by caution and a desire to play for safety, however prosperous the company had been. In all commercial matters he was essentially a pioneer, a blazer of trails.

Although in these earlier days he seldom summoned all his colleagues together in working hours, he was very fond of asking them to his house for dinner, and a great many informal meetings were held in this way. To begin with, these evening meetings at Thornton Manor took place once a fortnight, and some of the managers attended as well as the directors. Later they became less formal; wives accompanied their husbands, and Mrs. Lever would entertain her lady guests in the drawing-room, generally far beyond the conventional limit of time, while the men sat talking over their cigars.

After the retirement of J. D. Lever and Percy J. Winser, the two directors who figured most largely in the business were Robert Barrie, a quiet, shrewd and able Scotsman who was responsible for the purchasing of all the Company's raw materials, and John Lever Tillotson, the eldest son of William Frederick Tillotson. J. L. Tillotson retained the chairmanship of Tillotson & Sons, the newspaper and printing business founded by his father, but from 1899, when he joined the Board of Lever Brothers, until his death in 1915, he devoted practically the whole of his time to Lever Brothers, being in charge of all the Overseas Associated Companies, a position which necessitated almost incessant travelling. New Year's Day, 1907, saw two

further appointments of importance in the annals of the business, the new directors being James Lever Ferguson, the son of Lever's brother-in-law, J. S. Ferguson, and John Gray. J. L. Ferguson had been in charge of the London Sales Office before taking control of the whole of the sales organization in the United Kingdom, and John Gray had succeeded P. J. Winser as general works manager, and from 1918 to 1920 he was vice-chairman of the Company. Another colleague of Lever's whose name should be recorded was Edmund Vanutell Salaman, who, after being the firm's London manager, became the head of the Export Department, and in 1910 a member of the Board.

From this brief reference to some of the principal figures connected with Lever's daily business life, I must pass on to one or two events at home and abroad which mark further stages in the growth of Lever Brothers. Hitherto, we have seen the firm as far as the United Kingdom is concerned as one company only, but with daughter companies in the Dominions, in America and in several of the countries of Europe. It is true that Lever had already acquired the business of Benjamin Brooke, but that company was absorbed into Lever Brothers rather than affiliated with it. The purchase, however, in 1906 of Hodgson & Simpson, Ltd., an old-established firm of soap-manufacturers in Wakefield, and in the same year of the Vinolia Company, Ltd., of London, and in 1908 of R. S. Hudson, Ltd., of Liverpool and West Bromwich, marked the beginning of a new era, associated companies, as distinct from daughter companies, appearing for the first time.

In 1904 Lever purchased eight hundred acres of land between the Birkenhead–Chester Road and the River Mersey, with a mile and a half of deep-water frontage, and in 1908 a company to develop this land was incorporated under the name of the Bromborough Port Estate, Ltd. Although the Estate is always referred to as "Bromboro," it is in reality a greater Port Sunlight, as the works erected on it, with one exception, are all connected with Lever Brothers, and the workmen's houses, which now number some two hundred and ninety, are, as far as high building costs have permitted, in the Port Sunlight style. This land at Bromborough was the only undeveloped water frontage on the left bank of the Mersey between the entrance to the Manchester Ship Canal and Birkenhead, and the develop-

ments which have since taken place upon it, including oil-refineries and a margarine-works and culminating in the dock, now in process of construction, which will bring ocean-going steamers to Port Sunlight's very door, prove how far-sighted Lever was in making the original purchase.

Some six years after the acquisition of the Bromborough Estate, two smaller ones—the Woodhead Estate and the Mersey Bank Estate—were bought, and by this means Lever Brothers acquired almost the entire foreshore rights between New Ferry Pier and the entrance to the Manchester Ship Canal.

Lever had always been a strong advocate of a shorter working day (for everybody, one is tempted to add, except himself), and at Port Sunlight he was the first employer in the district to institute an eight-hour day. In 1905 he established the Employees' Benefit Fund, through which pensions were given to employees who retired on reaching the age of sixty-five in the case of men and sixty in the case of women. The Benefit Fund was later extended to such associated companies as desired to take part in it. In 1905 he promoted the Employees' Holiday Club, which, opening with a membership of over two thousand, has steadily increased. The members contribute a few pence each week, and when their holidays come round in the summer draw out their total contributions, the Company paying their usual wages while they are away.

In 1905, as a recognition of long service, he instituted a system of "Long Service Awards," under which an employee or member of the staff, on completing fifteen years' service with the Company, receives a certificate, a silver badge and a gold watch; gold badges were afterwards introduced as a recognition of twenty-five years' service.

CHAPTER XII

PORT SUNLIGHT

ALTHOUGH at the close of Lord Leverhulme's life Port Sunlight was only one of a number of works at home and abroad associated with Lever Brothers, it has always been the largest and most important, and it is primarily with the works and village of Port Sunlight that the public will always associate the names of Leverhulme and Lever Brothers. In a previous chapter I have shown how Port Sunlight began with the purchase of some fifty-two acres of land, and how a start was made with the village by building twenty-nine houses. From that time onwards, as opportunity offered, further purchases of land were made, mainly in small portions from small owners, many of whom, in view of the established prosperity of the firm, asked quite impossible prices to begin with. Looking at Port Sunlight to-day with its well-grown trees, its houses and public buildings, most of them showing the mellowing effect of time, and its level open spaces for playing-fields and allotment gardens, it is easy to forget the difficulties there were in negotiating for the various pieces of land and in changing into a smiling and happy industrial village a stretch of landscape which originally looked a most uninviting spot for such an enterprise.

"Anything more unprepossessing than this site can hardly be imagined," wrote the late W. L. George in his *Labour and Housing at Port Sunlight*, published in 1910. "It was mostly but a few feet above high-water level and liable at any time to be flooded by high tides and thus to become undistinguishable from the muddy foreshores of the Mersey. Moreover, an arm of Bromborough Pool spread in various directions through the village, filling the ravines with ooze and slime; a few houses, or rather shanties, were scattered on the higher portions, whose condition as regards sanitation can easily be conjectured. It was land suitable for a dock, but it did not, at first sight, seem fitted for human settlement."

On a more ideal site the village might have been easier and less expensive to build, though the final achievement could hardly

have been better suited to its purpose. Certainly, without the ravines—originally twenty-five acres in extent—to be filled in, the making of Port Sunlight would not have been to Lever the fascinating and joyous undertaking that it was. Altering the face of Nature was with him a passion. He was never happier than when seated in front of a plan with a drawing-board, ruler and T-square ready to hand. Architecture was always an absorbing study for him, and one can safely say that no single man—at any rate in modern times—has ever built a larger number of houses and buildings and constructed a greater mileage of roads. With him it was never a case of leaving everything to the architect and settling the bill when the work was finished. Expert advice he wisely sought and freely acknowledged, but the plan and lay-out of Port Sunlight were his own, and so, in the main, were the plans of the works and the buildings in the village, and in many cases of the houses also. The architects he employed all looked upon him as unique amongst their clients. He did not employ them—he collaborated with them. An interesting reference to the first plan of Port Sunlight occurs in a speech he delivered at the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1923. Incidentally it also illustrates the fruitful way in which he was in the habit of occupying his spare time on board ship.

"One of the most delightful voyages I have had round the world," he said, "was when in 1892 I left England and took with me among my papers a scheme for the real Port Sunlight. I came back with the plan for the place as it exists to-day. I have tried to find that old plan and I have asked the architects about it, but it cannot be found. Perhaps I did not attach any importance to it at the time and it was put with other papers which were not thought of much account; but I would give a good deal for it to-day, if I could find it."

We find an even earlier plan mentioned in a letter which he wrote in 1918 to his friend, Thomas H. Mawson, the well-known landscape architect, who carried out a great deal of work for him in later years. This letter gives 1890 as the date of this earlier plan.

"I did not then own all the land," he tells Mr. Mawson. "I made the plans so that as the land was acquired the streets could run where, at the time I planned Port Sunlight, I had no power to run them. It

always seems to me that the life of the people, in all town planning, must be the first consideration. I think it was yourself who told me that, in planning Venice, the ancient Venetians made a rule that their city must be beautiful, but that beauty must not be gained at the sacrifice of commerce. . . . I believe it is equally true in town planning that the convenience and life of the people can be achieved without any sacrifice to beauty or inspiring vistas."

Port Sunlight was by no means the first industrial village. To find a much earlier example one has only to walk a mile from Port Sunlight to the village of Bromborough Pool, adjoining Messrs. Price's Candle Works, where, in the year 1853, Messrs. Price built a small village to house their work-people, at a time when the surrounding country was even more rural than at the date of the founding of Port Sunlight. Price's village, however —although a great step forward at the time—is more utilitarian and prosaic than Port Sunlight in its conception and in its architecture. Messrs. Cadbury's village at Bournville, the building of which was begun by the late George Cadbury in 1895, resembles Port Sunlight more closely than any other garden city, although each of the two villages was conceived, planned and built independently of the other. The outstanding difference is that Bournville is in a large measure detached from the business in its midst, and the tenant of a house need not necessarily be employed in Messrs. Cadbury's works; while at Port Sunlight the tenant must be employed by Lever Brothers, or be entitled to a house for some special reason arising out of the business.

Port Sunlight was begun, of course, long before the days of motoring, when wide roads were exceptional. Lever was a pioneer in the advocacy of wide thoroughfares, and in Port Sunlight he made the principal roads 36 feet wide with a 12-foot footpath on each side, his general practice being to devote to side-walks as many feet as there were yards in the width of the road.

The architecture of Port Sunlight may be broadly described as "Old English," and Lever wisely commissioned a variety of architects who, working within the limits of what may be called the Port Sunlight tradition, achieved a delightful diversity of designs. The principal architects, in addition to William Owen, who was later joined by his son, Segar Owen, were Messrs. Douglas & Fordham, Talbot & Wilson, Grayson

& Ould, T. T. Rees and Maurice B. Adams. Lever's old friend, Jonathan Simpson, was also responsible for a number, and his son, James L. Simpson, was in 1910 appointed by Lever Brothers as their own architect. Five years later he was elected to the Board of Directors. J. L. Simpson had, when in private practice, carried out several groups of houses in the village, and nearly all the cottages built after his appointment were designed by him. The houses flanking The Diamond, the large boulevard in the centre of the village, are all from his designs, and the way in which he has caught both the spirit and feeling of the Old English village is admirable, his treatment of " half-timber " work being, in the writer's opinion, impossible to better.

Among the houses of earlier architects two blocks are of special interest, one being an adaptation by Messrs. Talbot & Wilson of the design of Kenyon Old Hall, a fine old half-timbered manor house in Lancashire, and the other, which stands in the happily-named " Poets' Corner," an exact replica, designed by Mr. E. Kirby, of Shakespeare's birthplace at Stratford-on-Avon. Another group of cottages interesting on its own merits, although hardly in keeping with the rest of the village, is the one designed by Professor C. H. Reilly, of Liverpool University, now on the east side of the Lady Lever Art Gallery. The block is in the shape of a crescent, and is of the English Domestic Renaissance period. The Port Sunlight houses, with two or three exceptions, are in blocks of from three to seven, no block being exactly duplicated in design, and fall into two categories—Parlour houses and Kitchen houses—the former comprising a parlour, kitchen, scullery, pantry, bathroom and four bedrooms ; and the latter a kitchen, scullery, pantry, bathroom and three bedrooms. In one of the houses—" Bridge Cottage "—which faces the picturesque stone bridge spanning The Dell, Lever himself lived at intervals during 1896 and 1897 while alterations were in progress at Thornton Manor.

Nothing is more depressing than to gaze from a railway train upon serried rows of back-yards, and Lever avoided this at Port Sunlight by constructing the wide thoroughfare of Greendale Road between the railway embankment and the village. Behind the houses are allotment gardens, one being available for every householder if desired, and in front are lawns, broken with shrubs. To ensure orderliness these front gardens

were, until recently, looked after by the Village Estate Department, and the result struck the one sombre note in the village; for evergreen shrubs, unrelieved by flowers to give a touch of colour, have a funereal air. During the last few years, however, the tenants have been encouraged, though not obliged, to look after their own front gardens and to make their homes more beautiful by growing flowers and, where the design of the house permits, by displaying window-boxes. As an incentive to the tenants, the village is divided into sections, and in each section prizes, which take the form of reductions in rent, are offered for the best front gardens. The change has greatly enhanced the brightness and beauty of the village.

Considered on its own merits, apart from the business of Lever Brothers, the village was never intended to be a paying concern. Had the earlier and less expensive designs been adhered to, the houses could no doubt have been let at rentals which would have yielded a modest return on the capital invested, but the policy was to charge such rents as would cover rates and taxes, repairs and maintenance, and depreciation at the rate of 1 per cent. per annum, without reckoning anything for interest on capital, the loss which the Estate account continued to show being considered in the light of prosperity-sharing with the employees. In a paper read before the Architectural Association on March 21st, 1902, Lever pointed out that while the Building Act permitted forty-five cottages "being crushed like sardines in a box on one acre of land," the number of houses per acre at Port Sunlight was only seven. "The ingenious builder," he told his audience, "who can see his way to squeeze most houses on a given plot of land, sees his way at the same time to give the highest price for the land so as to secure it." The remedy he proposed in order to prevent the erection of this type of property, which must inevitably degenerate into slums, was to limit by law the number of cottages allowed to be built on an acre of land to twelve, "the maximum limit possible for the maintenance of healthy life." The price of building land, he argued, would automatically fall if these restrictions were introduced.

Few self-contained communities are richer than Port Sunlight in social and educational institutions and in buildings to house them. I propose to describe all the buildings, with the exception

of the Lady Lever Art Gallery, in this chapter, so that this side of my father's work at Port Sunlight may be seen as a whole and not in fragments; but, before mentioning the institutions themselves, it will be as well to say a word about the general way in which Port Sunlight's social activities are carried on. A frequent criticism directed against industrial communities like Port Sunlight is that the private lives of the employees are interfered with too much by the employer. A workman, we are told, does not want during his leisure hours to have a benevolent and paternal interest taken in him by the firm for which he works. As far as possible Lever always tried to avoid any suggestion of control by the Company or himself over the social life of Port Sunlight. In a large town, where ample opportunities exist for gratifying a diversity of tastes, employees may be, and probably are, happier if left free to find their own social amenities where they will, but to dwellers in Port Sunlight, especially in the early days, such amenities, close at hand, were practically non-existent. Lever's idea was to provide the facilities and to encourage the various clubs and societies as much as he could by personal support and interest, but to leave the conduct of them in the hands of the people themselves.

For Local Government purposes Port Sunlight works and village formed part of the urban districts of Bebington and Bromborough, which have recently been combined in one administrative area. Port Sunlight, therefore, has never been self-contained as far as Local Government is concerned. During the year 1902 Lever filled, by invitation of the members, the office of chairman of the Bebington Urban District Council, but apart from this it was always his policy that Lever Brothers as a company, although by far the largest ratepayer in the district, should refrain from any direct participation in Local Government. Port Sunlight, of course, elects representatives to the local council, and these representatives are naturally connected with the firm, but they serve in their capacity as private citizens, and Lever Brothers always remain scrupulously neutral when local elections take place. In 1895 a Port Sunlight Village Council was formed, to which the residents in the village, and the employees generally, elected representatives. This council, of course, had nothing whatever to do with Local Government affairs, its functions being solely in connection with the various village institutions,

clubs and societies which were springing up. Lever's brother-in-law, J. S. Ferguson, who took a great interest in the village life, was appointed chairman of this council, and the directors of the Company, including Lever and his brother, sat on some of the sub-committees, but they did so at the desire of the people and not as representing the Company.

The village hall, opened by Mr. Gladstone in 1891, served as a men's dining-room until 1910, when dining-halls for both men and girls were opened in the factory itself. To begin with, it was provided with a stage of rather a primitive kind, and occasional amateur performances of plays and operettas were given there, but later on this stage was enlarged and very much improved, and operatic and dramatic performances at the Gladstone Hall are now given regularly during the winter months. The next building to be opened was the village schools, designed by Douglas & Fordham, with accommodation for five hundred scholars, and until the passing of the Elementary Education Act in 1902 these schools were carried on by Lever Brothers for the children in Port Sunlight, and were managed by a committee, half of the members of which were appointed by the Company and half elected by the residents. The central hall of the school was designed so that it could be used for services on Sundays, a folding screen separating the chancel, organ loft and choir stalls from the rest of the hall. In 1902 these schools were taken over by the local Education Authority, and in 1903 a second elementary school was built in the village and leased to the same authority. Several years later, on building a large council school in the neighbourhood, the local authorities had no further use for the first of the two school buildings, and its name was then changed to "The Lyceum." To-day it is the headquarters of the Staff Training College.

On August 11th, 1896, the Men's Social Club, originally called "The Pavilion" and now "The Co-partners' Club," was opened. Attached to it were two billiard-rooms and a bowling-green. In September of the same year a hostel for workgirls was opened, consisting of a series of four homes, each with twelve cubicle bedrooms, bathrooms, a parlour, living-room, kitchen, and so on, to accommodate a total of forty-eight girls, but, excellent as the intention was, the scheme did not appeal to the girls, and the hostel was never more than a quarter

full. Lever then converted part of the building into a girls' restaurant, and the other part into a Junior Social Club. The ground floor of this building is now the Lever Free Library, and the upper storey "The Progress Club," where various business committees hold their meetings. The success of this girls' restaurant, and of the larger one which eventually followed it, was principally due to the untiring interest taken in it by Mrs. Winser, the wife of the works director, to whose memory and the work she did in Port Sunlight, more particularly amongst the girls employed there, a brass tablet in the village church pays an affectionate tribute. When the number of girls requiring a midday meal had outgrown the smaller building, a larger one was built, which Lever called "The Hulme Hall" after his wife's maiden name; but a few years later even this building became too small, and a canteen was opened in the works. Lever then converted the Hulme Hall into an Art Gallery, placing in it a portion of his collection of furniture, pictures and china, including his finest specimens of Chinese porcelain and the famous collection of Wedgwood pottery which formerly belonged to the first Lord Tweedmouth. This collection became the nucleus of the "Lady Lever Collection" and Art Gallery which followed later.

One of the most valuable of the Port Sunlight institutions has been the Girls' Social Club, which originally held its meetings in an assembly hall over the village shop. The club was successfully carried on there, under the guidance of a ladies' committee, which included Mrs. Lever and her sister-in-law, Mrs. J. D. Lever, until 1913, when new and more suitable quarters were built for it on The Diamond. The main object of the club, which is still a thriving institution, has been to provide the girls with a place where they can meet together for companionship and, under the supervision of a lady superintendent, attend classes in needlework, cookery and housewifery.

Ten years after its foundation Port Sunlight had grown to a size which made necessary the provision of a village inn, and Lever commissioned Messrs. Grayson & Ould to design one on the lines of an old-fashioned hostelry. The Bridge Inn, so-called on account of its proximity to a bridge, since done away with, has dining-room accommodation to seat two or three hundred people when necessity arises, and there are also a few bedrooms

for guests. It was opened in 1900 as an unlicensed house, and it was Lever's intention when he built it that it should be conducted on temperance lines. Two years later, however, he was approached by several of the residents and asked if he would be willing that a licence should be applied for by the Committee of Management. As a strong supporter of "Local Option" he felt that a poll of the residents would be the best way of settling the matter, and he accordingly arranged for one to be taken, stipulating that women should vote as well as men, and that there must be a 75 per cent. vote in favour of a licence before he would give his consent. The poll, when taken, showed that 80 per cent. of those voting wanted the licence. The incident raised a good deal of local controversy, as there were not a few who looked askance at the idea of a "model" village like Port Sunlight possessing a public-house, and a Temperance deputation waited upon Lever to urge him not to countenance the change. He pointed out, however, that in politics he had always supported Local Option, and asked those who came to see him how he could avoid putting into practice what he preached. He reminded them also that they, too, were advocates of Local Option. They admitted that in other places they were, but in Port Sunlight Lever had the power of absolute veto, and they trusted he would use it. He declined, however, to settle the matter by dictatorship. The overwhelming vote in favour of a licence showed that not only the men supported the change, but the women also, and the reason they gave was that they knew their menfolk wanted their glass of beer, and they much preferred that they should have it at the inn in their own village, where they were known, rather than farther afield. After the granting of the licence the management of the Bridge Inn was taken over by the Liverpool branch of Earl Grey's Public House Trust. Finding, however, that it would not make the modest 4½ per cent. interest which it expected from its investment, the Trust relinquished the house in 1905, when its management was placed in the hands of a committee representative of the firm and the inhabitants. The inn has made profits in the summer months owing to the influx of visitors to Port Sunlight, but during the winter, when it has had to depend almost entirely on local custom, losses have been the rule, which goes to prove that the solution of the drink problem lies in the provision of homes which do not call for the

public-house as an antidote to discomfort and unhealthy conditions, rather than in drastic measures of prohibition.

Christ Church, which was a personal gift from Lever to the village of Port Sunlight, has, apart from its architectural beauty, an interest and significance by no means limited to the community which it serves, since it is a village church conducted on what are practically undenominational lines. But before describing the building itself, it will be as well to say something of the developments which led up to it. For several years there was no distinct church building belonging to any denomination within the boundary of Port Sunlight. After the Gladstone Hall was opened in 1891 Lever instituted there on Sunday evenings a series of sacred concerts and lectures, the latter generally illustrated by lantern slides. Lever attended them almost every Sunday when he was at home, and sometimes he lectured on his travels abroad ; he knew, however, that these meetings, successful and popular as they were, could not pretend to minister to all the religious needs of the village, and so, as I have already mentioned, when he built the village schools in 1896, he arranged for the central hall to have a chancel, screened off by folding doors when not in use, so that the building could be used for public worship. On the first Sunday in each month the services were taken by the Vicar of New Ferry, the Rev. Halsall Segar, in whose parish Port Sunlight lay, and on the other Sundays they were conducted by representative Free Church ministers in the neighbourhood. This interesting experiment worked well and happily until 1900, when the Vicar of New Ferry found himself unable to continue his share in the work. Lever then felt that the congregation could only be successfully held together by the appointment of a resident minister in the village, and, a short time afterwards, the Rev. S. Gamble-Walker, a young Wesleyan minister in Birkenhead, and a most able and impressive preacher, was invited to take charge.

Side by side with this Church work grew up a strong Sunday-school, the first classes being held in the village schools on April 17th, 1898, when fifty boys and girls were present. Throughout his life Lever continued to take the keenest possible interest in the Sunday-school, and frequently addressed the scholars both at the Sunday morning services, which came into existence later, and at the large annual gatherings held at

Midsummer and Christmas. The addresses he gave were sometimes based on Bible stories, but more frequently they were quite unconventional in character, and he took great delight in telling the children fairy stories and folklore tales garnered in the various countries he visited. To keep the children interested he would introduce questions, asking those who could answer him to hold up their hands. In this way the children's attention was riveted in a manner which seldom falls to the lot of the average man who attempts that most difficult of tasks, "a children's address." His interest in the schools, however, was by no means limited to these special occasions; often on a Sunday afternoon he would go the round of the various classes accompanied by his wife and say a few words to each. He also made a practice, at least once a year, of visiting the elementary day schools in the neighbourhood to present various prizes which he provided, and certificates to the winners of the scholarships which he gave annually for the children of employees. On one such occasion, when handing a boy a prize for never having been late or absent at school for several years, he placed a sovereign in the boy's hand, saying, "And this is for your mother; I know quite well that it was she who got you up early!"

The success which attended the services conducted in the village schools led to the building of Christ Church, the foundation stone of which was laid by Mrs. Lever in 1902, the opening ceremony taking place two years later. The architect of the church, which is in the period of Perpendicular Gothic, was Segar Owen, F.R.I.B.A., the son of Lever's friend, William Owen. In its services and its design Christ Church may be regarded as in no small measure a symbol of Lever's religious outlook. As a Congregationalist by upbringing and a strong individualist in all his habits of thought, he felt little attraction towards rigid expressions of creed and any system of Church government which restricted personal liberty of thought; at the same time his love and study of architecture, with its great inheritance from the past, made him out of sympathy with what was then, even more than now, the usual style of architecture and arrangement in the average Nonconformist church. He loved the dignified beauty and charm of our old parish churches and cathedrals, and the liturgical services associated with them.

To his mind the Puritans of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had followed that extreme swing of the pendulum, called prejudice, rather than reasoned principle, when they attacked almost root and branch the architectural and devotional atmosphere of those churches with whose method of government they disagreed. In its general appearance, therefore, there is little to distinguish Christ Church with its nave, transepts and chancel, its choir stalls, communion rails and altar table from a typical Anglican church. The men and boys in the choir wear surplices, and the women purple and black Lutheran robes. There is a fine four-manual organ in the church by Henry Willis & Sons, and in the tower a peal of eight bells. The three end windows in the chancel were placed there by Lever, at the time the church was built, as a memorial to his parents.

When giving the church to the village, Lever placed it under the trusteeship of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and decreed that any minister appointed in the future must be in Congregational orders; subject to this proviso, the appointment is entirely in the hands of the Church members. In attaching the Church to the Congregational Union in this way, however, Lever had in mind the protection of its future from a legal standpoint rather than any intention that it should be regarded as a Congregational Church in a strictly limited sense. As an endowment he gave, a few years later, Co-partnership shares in Lever Brothers, Ltd., but this endowment leaves a healthy margin to be provided by voluntary contributions. It will be seen that Lever's motive in building the church was to provide a place of worship in the village where the majority of the residents could unite together. In a large measure the scheme has succeeded and abundantly justified its originator's faith. Members of the Church of England and of various Nonconformist communions have co-operated on the Church Committee and in other ways; but a longer period of time must be allowed to elapse before it can be seen whether the Congregational system of Church government, as carried out at Port Sunlight, can be applied successfully to a Church intended to serve a whole community rather than a section of it only. In the meantime Christ Church remains an interesting experiment and one deserving the attention of those who wish to see fewer divisions in the Christian Church than there are at present.

PORTRAIT OF MRS. LEVER BY SIR LUKE FILDES, R.A.

Another outstanding building in the village is the Auditorium which stands at the eastern end of The Dell. It was completed in 1903, and was originally intended to be an open-air theatre, but experience soon showed that such a scheme, except on occasions which could not be counted upon beforehand, was quite unsuited to the English climate. The stage, which was designed by Messrs. Grayson & Ould, is 50 feet wide and 35 feet deep, and it was originally equipped with all the requirements of an up-to-date theatre. At first the audience sat on the grassy slopes of the Dell, but when this was found impossible a concrete floor was laid and roofed in with canvas. Even so, the building was inhospitable except on warm summer nights, and Lever saw that he must build permanent walls and a roof. It was hoped that touring companies might regularly visit the Auditorium, and an enterprising opening was made by one of Mr. (now Sir) F. R. Benson's Shakespearean companies—a happy omen, one was tempted to say, since the theatre is within a few yards of the replica of the poet's birthplace. But, alas, it was found that the auditorium was far too large in proportion to the stage, and that beyond the first few rows the actors were inaudible. One or two other companies followed, but the acoustic properties of the building soon damped the ardour of the dwindling audiences. Nearly three thousand people can be seated in the Auditorium, and as an assembly hall, especially for the great co-partnership meetings which were held there later on, the building has been an unqualified success ; as a theatre, however, it has unfortunately proved a failure.

To complete the list of buildings and institutions in the village, one must mention the Technical Institute, the Cottage Hospital, the Open-air Swimming Bath and the Gymnasium. The Technical Institute was opened in 1903, and for a great many years evening classes were held there until the Company's own "Staff Training College" was instituted. The Cottage Hospital was completed in 1907 and contains three wards, each with eight beds, and a surgery and operating theatre. The medical staff comprises three local practitioners, under whom is a resident doctor, and there are a matron, two sisters, and a staff of trained nurses. The hospital is managed by a committee jointly representative of the Company and the village, of which a director of the firm must be chairman. The Open-air Swimming Bath, in

shape an oval, measuring 100 feet by 75 feet, and with a capacity of 225,000 gallons, was "opened" on July 5th, 1902, by the first Lord Stanmore.

In the life which centred round the various institutions, clubs and societies at Port Sunlight, Lever always took the greatest interest, more especially during the twenty years before the War, when London claimed less of his time. As "Chairman" at the numerous gatherings which took place he was in constant demand, and seldom was the date of any important village event fixed until it had been ascertained that he could be present. To all organizations connected with games and recreations, and to those which cultivated a love of art, literature and science, he gave the warmest encouragement; in no case was this more noticeable than in the Philharmonic Society, which was the more remarkable in that he himself had practically no ear for music at all. To spend an hour or two in an art gallery or at a good play was to him the height of enjoyment, while to listen to classical music for the same length of time must have been the depth of boredom, but the interest which he took in the Philharmonic Society was probably greater on that account. In the case of the other arts he knew that his own enthusiasm would ensure sufficient attention to them; in the case of music, realizing the pleasure which it gave to its devotees, he conscientiously imposed upon himself the duty of fostering a love for it in the village in every way he could. In 1904 he arranged for the Philharmonic Society to give a concert at the Queen's Hall, London, and on one occasion they made a public appearance as far away as Liège in Belgium.

In the days when far more of Lever's time could be given to Port Sunlight than was possible later, the part he played in the lives of the people was by no means limited to his appearances at public meetings and entertainments. Himself what the Americans call "a good mixer," he encouraged all with whom he was connected to become good mixers too. "Class consciousness," at whichever end or part of the social scale it might appear, he could not tolerate. On one occasion, at a village gathering, noticing a tendency amongst those present to divide themselves into cliques, he drew aside one or two of those who took a prominent part in the social life of the village and spoke his thoughts to them. The result was the formation of a society,

the object of which was, by means of regular meetings for social intercourse, debates, lectures and so forth, to break down, for a few hours each week at any rate, the social barriers which tended to separate the inhabitants. With the older employees, especially those who had been with him at Warrington, he never lost personal touch, and I think that the only regret he had with regard to the ever-increasing size of his business was the fact that the personal relationship between his employees and himself tended inevitably to become collective rather than individual.

CHAPTER XIII

THORNTON HOUGH AND 20, NORFOLK STREET

MY parents went to Thornton Manor in the autumn of 1888, and it was my father's principal residence until 1919, when my wife and I went to live there; even then, however, he remained in undisturbed possession of his "sanctum," dressing-room and open-air bedroom, so that in a sense it happily never ceased to be one of his homes. For the first three years he rented the house, actually buying it in 1891 but, once it became his own he indulged with little delay in his favourite hobby of "alterations," and carried out the first of a long series of extensions and improvements which eventually altered the entire character and appearance of the house and left but few traces of the original structure. One of the pleasantest features in the garden was "The Dell," the original part of which remains almost exactly as my father found it. There is a saying that every field in Cheshire has its pit—originally they were marl pits—and so it happens that many of the houses in the county have in their grounds a pond or dell. The Dell at Thornton Manor stands at some distance from the house, and the first improvement which my father carried out was to widen and divert slightly the path which leads to it, and then to double the size of The Dell itself. One of the earliest recollections which I have of my father is when as a small child I walked with him, or was carried on his shoulder, down this path. In those days, at the beginning of the 'nineties, when he had just turned forty, my father wore a clipped light-brown beard, which he shaved off, however, a few years later, and his thick growth of hair stood up above his wide forehead in that same characteristic way which, in later years, gave to cartoonists their one opportunity of accentuating a peculiarity which no one could mistake. I remember my father saying that few men, in his experience, changed their style of collar and tie and similar individualities in their dress after they passed forty. It was certainly so in his own case, and all who knew him will recall his low stand-up

collars and his black-and-white bow ties. His familiar cut of tail-coat and his grey, hard felt hat were also characteristics which he consistently adhered to, and which, like his collars and ties, became standardized in the early 'nineties.

Lever's first purchase at Thornton comprised the house, grounds and woods. Near the house were some farm buildings, and for the first few years he carried on this farm and derived a great deal of pleasure from it. The house itself commanded a fine view of the Welsh hills, and in front of it was an extensive park, now considerably reduced in size owing to additions made to the garden. This park and the field adjoining it were, in the early days of Port Sunlight, the scene of an annual picnic and fête for the work-people and for the villagers from Thornton Hough and two or three neighbouring hamlets.

Lever's favourite recreations at this time were riding and driving. For a while he was very fond of going down to business on horseback, but later on he used to ride before breakfast. He was most methodical in the way he took his rides, nearly always starting at the same hour, going over the same roads, and changing from a walk to a trot and from a trot back to a walk at the same spots each time. Sometimes he would ride to Parkgate, three miles away, and gallop on the sands of the Dee, where it is possible, at the right state of the tide, to reach the edge of the narrow but deep channel which skirts the Welsh bank of the estuary. He delighted in driving his stanhope and pair, and was a skilful whip. In 1899 he took a furnished house at Hoylake for the summer, and used to drive his stanhope and pair to Port Sunlight each morning, frequently reaching the office in less time than it took the train to reach Bebington Station, via Hooton Junction. He also drove a four-in-hand during the 'nineties, his favourite run being to Chester, changing horses at the Yacht Inn. Shooting was another of his pastimes during the early days at Thornton. In 1891 he bought a farm lying between his house and the village of Thornton Hough, and this provided him with rough shooting over some three hundred acres. He must have given up shooting about 1897. In August of 1898 he rented a moor from Lord Lonsdale and engaged the whole of the visitors' accommodation at the Sun Inn at Pooley Bridge on Ullswater, where he entertained a succession of relatives and friends. The moor, however, was for

the benefit of others, for, although he sometimes joined the shooting parties, he did not carry a gun himself. His chief recreation during this holiday—when he was not attending to business with his secretary—was found in driving his four-in-hand. The modern form of bicycle was then coming into favour, and just before the Pooley Bridge holiday he learnt to ride one, and cycled a little while he was in the Lake district, but gave it up soon afterwards.

His diary shows that it was on September 14th, 1891, that Lever formed the definite resolution that physical exercises, which he had practised intermittently since he went to the Thomasson Gymnasium as a boy, should thereafter become a daily rule. "For probably twenty-four years," the entry states, "I have occasionally practised gymnastics. For the last six years I have been more regular, and for the last year I have practised almost daily and find the greatest possible benefit. From this day I propose to book a daily record of dinners, cigars, wines and the exercises I have taken as a guide for the future." He did not keep a detailed diary of each day's events beyond the 30th of August, 1896, except during his journeys abroad, but the statistics with regard to exercises, meals and wines, times of rising and so forth, he continued systematically in accordance with his resolution. The records show that, during the 'nineties, he generally rose about 6.30 in the morning, breakfasted at 7.30, and retired to bed as a rule not later than 10.30, and frequently as early as nine o'clock. Until he gave up smoking he enjoyed a cigar, and smoked two or three a day. He indulged in cigarettes very occasionally, and hardly ever in a pipe. His decision to give up smoking was made on the 23rd of July, 1896, at the house of a friend, Mr. Robert Smith, of Liverpool, where he was spending the night. His friendship with Robert Smith began in the days when on behalf of his firm, Smith & Bateson, paper merchants, Robert Smith used to call on James Lever and his son at Bolton and Wigan, and it continued throughout Lever's life. Robert Smith and his brother, the late Rev. Richard Smith, Vicar of Loughton, near Newton-le-Willows, were invariably members of the shooting parties at Thornton. On this particular evening in Liverpool the two friends had been discussing the question of smoking, and whether it was possible to give up the habit. "I will give it up if you will,"

one said to the other. "All right," was the reply. It was a wager in which the satisfaction of winning was to be the only stake, and, from that day onwards, neither of them ever smoked. Attempts were made by friends to persuade them to consider the contest at an end, and matches were struck with the suggestion that they should light a cigar simultaneously, but neither would give way.

A few years after he came to Thornton Manor, Lever acquired, by degrees, the greater part of the village of Thornton Hough. The exteriors of some of the old cottages with their whitewashed walls and thatched roofs were very picturesque, but inside they were dark, damp and unhealthy. In one of these cottages, consisting of one living-room and one bedroom, a farm-labourer and his wife had brought up a family of twelve children. Lever told the farm-labourer's wife, who had become a widow, that he would build her a new house, but at first she was loath to leave the home in which her whole married life had been spent. He suggested that she should obtain the opinion of her son-in-law, who was the village carpenter, as to whether any remedy, except pulling down the house, was possible. The carpenter's diagnosis was brief and to the point. "If you touch the roof you will pull the walls out, and if you touch the walls you will have the roof down." The case of this widow and her hard struggle for existence was cited by Lever when, as a Member of Parliament, he introduced, as a Private Member's Bill, a measure for old age pensions. Many of the other houses in the village were in the same condition—in fact, the more picturesque the exterior of the cottage, the more impossible did the internal arrangements appear to be, and Lever saw that complete demolition was the only remedy. He therefore replaced this insanitary property with cottages, after the Port Sunlight model, each containing from three to five bedrooms, and in the largest of these houses he carried on for some years a girls' orphanage. In addition to these cottages he built several other blocks of houses, but the land in front of the parish church he left as an open space, equipping it with a football field and pavilion, a tennis-court, a bowling-green and a quoiting ground. A small Nonconformist chapel had existed in Thornton Hough, even before it possessed a parish church of its own, and in 1904 Lever built, to replace this chapel, a larger temporary structure on another site and appointed as

minister the Rev. T. Langford Burrows, who for the previous ten years had officiated at the church—to be referred to later—which Lever and his brother built in Bolton. At the same time he erected the Lever Undenominational Day Schools, the building being designed by his old friend, Jonathan Simpson. A little later he built on an island site in the village St. George's Congregational Church, perhaps his most striking contribution to ecclesiastical architecture. The church was designed by Mr. J. L. Simpson, the son of his old friend, and is one of the very few examples of a modern church carried out entirely in the Norman style. Great pains were taken to have every feature historically correct, even to a stone altar with five consecrational crosses cut into its surface. The organ case was carved from oak taken from the house in Bolton in which Mrs. Lever was born. The building of this church involved the pulling down of several plain stone cottages and a smithy. The cottages Lever replaced by others more attractively designed, and he built a new smithy in the Old English half-timbered style, planting in front of it an appropriate chestnut-tree. On the site of the original Nonconformist chapel he built—also in the half-timber style—two shops and a Liberal club, the latter taking the place of one which he had founded some years earlier in one of the houses in the village. After the War the name of this club was changed, with the donor's full approval, to "The Village Club" and all political qualifications for membership were abolished, as with the altered spirit of the times it was felt to be wrong in principle that the only available club in a country village should be limited to those who professed adherence to one particular party.

Soon after Lever came to Thornton Hough, his brother, James Darcy Lever, followed him and acquired a house on the edge of the village called Thornton House. The original building was in white stucco, not very pleasing to the eye, and a few years later it was pulled down and replaced by a house in the Elizabethan style, designed by Messrs. Grayson & Ould on the lines of Darcy Lever Old Hall in Lancashire.

On November 28th, 1893, Mrs. James Lever died at Harwood Lodge, "a true wife, mother and woman," Lever wrote in his diary the same evening.

"In all my life I know of no incident relating to my mother, nor of anything my mother said or did, that was not right and good. My

father and mother were a model father and mother, and whatever position I have got to in life is due to their influence and example, without which I should be worse than nothing."

The following year Lever persuaded his father to allow him to build a house for him and his three unmarried daughters in Thornton Hough. At first James Lever was reluctant to leave Harwood Lodge and sever his connection with his native town of Bolton, but the prospect of spending the remainder of his days in the neighbourhood which had become the scene of his sons' activities eventually decided him. On May 9th, 1894, he was presented with a farewell address by the congregation of St. George's Road Congregational Church, Bolton, on whose diaconate he had served so long, and on May 25th of the following year he laid the foundation-stone of a new Congregational church in Blackburn Road, Bolton, which his two sons erected as a token of gratitude for the inspiration and example of their parents. This, the first church for the building of which Lever was responsible, was designed by Jonathan Simpson in the period of Late Gothic, a style which Lever said in a speech at the time might be thought by some "not suitable for a Dissenting place of worship, but which, it must be remembered, had been evolved hundreds of years ago by far greater minds than their own as one most suitable for places of worship, which, in architectural style, should, after all, be different from public buildings or private dwellings." This church took the place of an iron building erected in 1877 as a "daughter Church" by members of the congregation at St. George's Road, and it was thus the spiritual descendant of "Duke's Alley Chapel," of which James Lever was then the oldest surviving member.

He had by this time retired from the wholesale grocery business and become a director of Lever Brothers. In all that concerned his sons' work he took the greatest interest, and it was his great delight to take parties of old friends round the works and village. While Hesketh Grange—as his new home was called—was being built, he lived in a smaller house which his son had built in the village. This house, after his removal to Hesketh Grange, became the home of his daughter, Mrs. Bromiley, who called it "Thicket Ford," after the name of her former house near Harwood. About the same time, his second daughter, Mrs. Ferguson, and her husband bought

Thornton Lodge, and so it came about that in Thornton Hough seven out of the nine surviving children of James Lever were gathered round him once more.

James Lever carried into his ripe old age the characteristics which mark his first entry into these pages, except that, moving with the spirit of the age, towards the end of his life he seemed to free himself from some of his earlier restrictions of outlook. To his deeper convictions, however, he remained unswervingly true. He was slightly troubled by deafness, but otherwise his faculties and energies remained undimmed and his features told their own story of a careful life of health and vigour. He continued in robust health and activity almost to the day of his death, which took place on the 26th of May, 1897, in his eighty-eighth year.

With an office in London which made increasing claims upon his time, my father soon found that some form of home in London was necessary, and so at the end of 1893 he and my mother occupied a flat in Hyde Park Court, now the Hyde Park Hotel. In 1894 they removed to a house overlooking Park Lane —No. 20, Norfolk Street—and here, as was his wont, my father carried out several alterations and improvements to the interior. He occupied this house, however, for a very few years only, and between his leaving it and going to "The Hill," Hampstead Heath, in 1904, my parents generally stayed, when in London, with Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Gross at their home in Hampstead.

For eighteen months, from the end of 1895, while extensive alterations were in progress at Thornton Manor, they lived either at "Bridge Cottage," Port Sunlight, or at No. 20, Norfolk Street. When in London my father was fond, more especially on Sundays, of taking the train to some country spot and going for a long walk or drive. A whole Sunday away from home was unusual, however, as he generally went to church in the morning or evening. In the days before his hearing became defective, he would listen intently to a good sermon, however long, and made a point of hearing all the noted preachers of the day. His favourite places of worship were the King's Weigh House, at which church Dr. John Hunter was at that time minister, and St. Peter's, Vere Street, where, as a preacher, Canon Page-Roberts, whom he describes in his diary as "a very broad Churchman," strongly appealed to him.

While living in Norfolk Street my father became a regular visitor at Christie's and other sale-rooms, and he was already becoming known amongst the art dealers of London as a serious and knowledgeable collector of furniture, china and pictures. He was very fond of the theatre, and saw nearly all the plays of consequence during the 'nineties. Sometimes he would go to as many as four or five theatres in a week when he had friends staying with him in London. He had a great admiration for Irving, but his taste in all branches of Art was a catholic one, and he enjoyed, with almost equal zest, a serious drama, a rollicking farce, a musical comedy, or an evening at a music-hall.

During this period of his life my father certainly enjoyed more leisure in town than he did in the country. On account of his political and other public work the evenings which he had to himself at Thornton Manor were remarkably few; in fact, the home life of my parents used to seem to me, as a schoolboy home for the holidays, one long succession of public duties, and it appeared as if my father were never to be allowed, or to allow himself, a moment's peace.

CHAPTER XIV

POLITICS

MY father had not lived in Cheshire long before he was drawn into the vortex of local politics. His home influences and early environment had been on the side of Liberalism, and his speeches at local Liberal meetings soon proved the depth of his more mature convictions. His first invitation to stand for Parliament came from Birkenhead in the year 1892.

During the preceding six years the Liberal Party had passed through a harassing and difficult time. In 1886 Mr. Gladstone had introduced his first Home Rule Bill, which split the party in twain. The Bill had been thrown out on the Second Reading, and the General Election which followed had resulted in the return of Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister, backed by a majority composed of Conservatives and those Liberals who had severed themselves from their party over Home Rule. In the meantime, lawlessness in Ireland had increased, and feeling in England had been intensified by *The Times* articles on "Parnellism and Crime," which had led many people to believe that the leader of the Irish Party was involved in the outrages and murders which had taken place. The acquittal of Parnell by the Commission of three judges appointed by Lord Salisbury's Government and the exposure of the Pigott forgeries had done much to restore Liberal confidence and hopes, but there had followed Parnell's implication in the divorce suit instituted by Captain O'Shea, which raised a storm of indignation, and caused political and religious bitterness to be intensified still further. Such was the position prior to the General Election of 1892, when Lever was invited to be the Liberal candidate for Birkenhead, a constituency which, during the whole of its political history, had consistently returned a Conservative to the House of Commons. At the previous election a strong Liberal candidate had been defeated by over a thousand votes, and it was well known that at the forthcoming contest the anti-Home Rule Liberals would vote for the Con-

servative nominee. Lever was not anxious to accept. He was willing and ready to serve the party in a local capacity in any way he could, but a career in Parliament did not attract him, for the simple reason that his growing business was absorbing all his time. After listening to the persuasive speeches of the leaders of the deputation which waited upon him, he turned to one of them and said, "Will you give me an honest answer to a frank question?" "I will," was the reply. "Good," continued Lever. "Now, if I stand for Birkenhead, what chance have I of getting in?" "Not a dog's chance" was the answer, "but you will pull the party together." "All right. You can nominate me," he replied.

Having thrown himself into the fray, Lever fought with characteristic energy and enthusiasm. Once the election had begun, his sole purpose was to win, and he came within a measurable distance of doing so. His opponent was Viscount Bury, the son and heir of the seventh Earl of Albemarle. When Lever was adopted as prospective candidate, the dissolution had not actually taken place, but it was expected at any moment, and he lost no time in organizing an extensive campaign of open-air and indoor meetings. The election was held on July 4th, 1892, and Lord Bury was returned by a majority of 604, only half that which he had obtained at the last contest.

This General Election saw the return of Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister for the fourth time, although the Liberals were dependent for their majority on the Irish vote. The introduction of the second Home Rule Bill followed.

The next election in Birkenhead came much sooner than was expected, for, two years later, in August 1894, Lord Bury succeeded to the peerage on the death of his father, and Lever was again pressed by the Liberals to stand as their candidate. He had made all arrangements for a business visit to America, and was loath to accept the invitation. He offered to pay the whole of the election expenses if a suitable alternative candidate could be found, but agreed to come forward himself if the local party would defray the whole of his expenses. He had always held that the best men should be chosen as candidates, and that the possession of means should not be the deciding factor, and he made this offer to the Birkenhead Liberals in order that their

choice might be free from the dictates of opportunism. They accepted the second alternative, however, and he again became their candidate. The Conservative nominee was the late Sir Elliott Lees (then Mr. Elliott Lees), who had been Conservative member for Oldham during Lord Salisbury's Premiership. As a by-election in a constituency where the last Conservative majority had been a comparatively small one, the contest in Birkenhead aroused considerable interest. Prominent speakers were brought into the constituency, and Lever worked indefatigably in organizing the campaign and in addressing meetings, very often three or four times in one evening. One of the usual duties of a candidate, however, he resolutely refused to perform, and that was the canvassing of electors personally.

"I do not look favourably upon canvassing," he said, in one of his speeches; "it is highly improper for an employer of labour to canvass his workmen, or for Corporation officials to canvass the men in the employ of the Corporation. Nothing but moral suasion and argument should be employed, and I desire no other result than the wishes of the electors. I have not called upon a single person to ask for his vote, neither have I visited private works or property for the purpose of making an election speech. I should not feel comfortable if I were returned on any basis other than that I represent the principles of the majority of the electors and can serve the borough."

The campaign lasted for a month, and the election resulted in the return of the Conservative candidate by the narrow margin of 106 votes. It was a pyrrhic victory, however, for Birkenhead ceased to be a safe seat. It became, and still remains, a borough where political fortunes are never a foregone conclusion.

The Parliament elected in 1892 lasted for three years. The Liberal Government, depending as it did on the Irish vote, had a troubled existence from the first. Mr. Gladstone, then in his eighty-fourth year, introduced the second Home Rule Bill, which, after long and acrimonious debate, was carried through the House of Commons, only to be rejected by the Lords, a fate shared by other Liberal measures. On March 3rd, 1894, Mr. Gladstone retired from active political life, and was followed in the Premiership by Lord Rosebery. Mr. Gladstone had for so long been the inspired leader and idol of Liberalism that it seemed almost impossible to imagine the Liberal Party without

him. To add to the Government's embarrassments, trade was bad, and the causes of bad trade are invariably laid at the door of the party which happens to be in power.

Unpropitious as the political horizon was, there were no thoughts of an impending election in the minds of those who foregathered at Thornton Manor on June 22nd, 1895, for the pleasant ceremony of presenting to Lever a congratulatory address, signed by over four thousand of his supporters, in recognition of his strenuous fight in the by-election a few months earlier. The address was presented by the late T. L. Dodds, who was Lever's chairman during all his contests in Birkenhead. In returning thanks, Lever made it clear that he would be unable to stand for Birkenhead again. Within a week, however, the Government was defeated on a snatch division. Lord Rosebery resigned, and the Conservatives came into office and appealed to the country. Another election was thus sprung upon Birkenhead, and Lever was again asked to accept nomination. Seeing that the battle had already begun, and realizing that the Liberals, if they failed to find another candidate, would have to leave the seat uncontested, he stepped into the breach. The election of 1895 was fought in Birkenhead with a fervour exceeding even that of the two previous contests. Knowing how narrow had been the margin of votes in their favour on the previous occasion, Lever's opponents fought more desperately than ever to retain the seat, concluding their campaign with a visit and speech by Mr. Balfour. Party feeling ran high. Lever was attacked from every conceivable standpoint, and during the campaign a mass meeting was organized by the work-people at Port Sunlight, of their own accord, to protest against certain attacks which had been made upon him as an employer. Fortunately, however, the election was not without its moments of humour. A Conservative speaker, in one of those moments of exuberance to which politicians of all parties are at times liable, described the Liberal supporters as "the scum of the town." Lever took up the point at his next meeting, and told his audience that, when his opponents used the expression "scum," they happened to touch upon a subject about which he, as a soap-maker, was bound to know something, and that his practical experience had taught him that the "scum" was invariably found at the top, but the Lees (lyes) at the bottom.

The result of the election was another close finish, Lever losing by 204 votes.

Notwithstanding their crushing defeat at the General Election, the Liberal Party in the House of Commons, under the leadership of Sir William Harcourt, proved a formidable and united Opposition. Many of the measures introduced by the Conservative Government were unpopular with a large section of the public, and the history of domestic politics during the next four years did much to revive Liberal hopes. In 1899, however, the South African War broke out and made a deep cleavage in the Liberal ranks. Since the previous General Election Lever had become chairman of the Liberal Association of the constituency in which he lived—the Wirral Division of Cheshire—and when the dissolution was announced in September 1900, the Wirral Liberal Council, being without a candidate, asked him to stand. Mr. Elliott Lees, the Member for Birkenhead, was away at the Front, and for that reason Lever had declined to oppose him. Had his personal ambition been to enter the House of Commons, there is no doubt that after his three arduous fights in Birkenhead, Lever could have obtained the offer of a "safe seat." He preferred, however, to tackle an almost forlorn hope, and accepted the invitation from Wirral, a constituency which had never yet returned a Liberal candidate. In the election of 1900, the South African War, of course, overshadowed every other question. The Liberal leaders were divided in opinion, and these divisions were reflected throughout the Liberal ranks in the country. Although criticizing the Government for their handling of the situation which had led to the war, Lever held that, once President Kruger had issued his ultimatum, the Government could not have refused the challenge, and that, the war having started, victory, involving the annexation of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, had become imperative.

Although Lever's views on the war were shared by most Liberals in Wirral, they did not please all, and certainly did not suit the Conservatives, who would have preferred a "Pro-Boer" as their opponent. The Conservative candidate was Mr. Joseph Hoult, of "The Rocklands," Thornton Hough, a near neighbour of Lever's, and the contest, although both sides fought hard, was of the pleasantest character, and in marked contrast to the Birkenhead campaigns. The atmosphere of good feeling and

the sporting spirit in which the seat was contested is illustrated by one of Lever's first acts, after becoming the Liberal candidate, the writing of a letter to Mr. Hoult, offering him the use of the Gladstone Hall at Port Sunlight for a meeting. In both his contests in Wirral, Lever felt that his position was made more difficult by reason of his being a large employer of labour in the constituency, and for this reason he made a special point of ensuring that the same facilities for public meetings in Port Sunlight were given to both parties. When the election day came he not only visited every polling district at least once, but found time to go by train to Bolton to record his vote for Franklin Thomasson, who was fighting the Westhoughton Division of Lancashire, where a close contest was expected and every vote might make a difference. When the poll in Wirral was declared, it was found that Lever had reduced the Conservative majority by 1,453 votes. Two years later Lever again accepted the chairmanship of the Wirral Liberal Association, and set to work to reorganize the machinery of the Association.

In one of his speeches as Liberal leader in Wirral he expressed surprise that a working-man could be a Conservative. The remark had an interesting sequel, for Alderman Salvidge (now the Right Hon. Sir Archibald Salvidge), leader of the Conservative Party in Liverpool and chairman of the Liverpool Conservative Working-men's Association, invited him to repeat the statement before a meeting of the Association. Lever at once consented, and a debate was arranged in Liverpool between him and Mr. F. E. Smith (now Lord Birkenhead) under the chairmanship of Alderman Salvidge. Mr. Smith opened with a clever speech, in the course of which he dealt with the legislation helpful to the working-classes which had been enacted by successive Conservative Governments since the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, while Lever replied by examining the Private Bills introduced by Liberal Members of the Opposition during recent years, explaining how they would have benefited the working-classes, and then telling his audience how the Merseyside Conservative Members had voted when they were before the House. There was a pleasant sequel to this winter night's debate, for Lever, in responding to the vote of thanks accorded him, invited representative members of the Conservative Working-men's Association to pay a visit to Port Sunlight

the following summer. The invitation was accepted in the same spirit in which it was given, and the following July some two hundred officers of the Association, together with Alderman Salvidge, Mr. F. E. Smith and other Members of Parliament visited Port Sunlight as Lever's guests.

In 1903 Joseph Chamberlain launched his Tariff Reform proposals, and the question of Free Trade or Protection became the principal topic of the day. Mr. F. E. Smith was at that time a near neighbour of Lever's, his home also being in the parish of Thornton Hough. He was rapidly coming to the front in local politics, and had been adopted as Conservative candidate for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, that stronghold of Irish Nationalism which has been represented for so many years by Mr. T. P. O'Connor. On the 4th of January, 1904, a public debate between Lever and Smith on the Tariff Reform issue was organized at Neston, a township some three miles from Thornton Hough. Mr. E. G. Hemmerde, at that time the Liberal candidate for Shrewsbury, was in the chair, and each speaker was given exactly forty-five minutes for his opening speech and a further ten minutes in which to reply to the other's arguments. At the end of the debate, after a show of hands had been taken, which indicated no emphatic majority for either side, the chairman tactfully announced that, in the absence of any more accurate method of counting, he would call it a drawn battle. "It is the glory of English politics," said the late Sir Edward Russell (afterwards Lord Russell of Liverpool), in proposing a vote of thanks to both speakers, "that they can be discussed in a friendly spirit and without interference with private friendships."

Lever had decided that he would not again stand for Parliament, and another candidate had been adopted in Wirral. On the eve of the General Election in 1906, however, the new candidate withdrew, and in this eleventh-hour emergency Lever saw no alternative but once again to accept nomination. So he handed over the Liberal chairmanship to his close personal and political friend, the late J. Fergus Smith, of Hoylake, and entered the lists. When the election came both sides fought hard, but the Liberal axe had already cut deep into the sturdy tree of Wirral Conservatism, and in the gale of Liberalism which swept the country in 1906, the tree could no longer stand.

Although the Conservatives increased their poll by 1,048 votes, the Liberals increased theirs by 3,754, and gained the seat by a majority of 1,701. Thus, after many strenuous fights, Lever was returned to Parliament, or perhaps it would more accurately reflect his own unexpressed personal feelings to say that he had at last contested an apparently hopeless seat once too often!

CHAPTER XV

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IT must not be inferred from the closing words of the last chapter that Lever's interest in politics was perfunctory, or that he fought his four unsuccessful elections from a sense of public duty thrust upon him from without rather than cultivated from within. He enjoyed political debate and the fighting of elections; but a career in the House of Commons never attracted him, for the simple reason that he knew beforehand that it would be quite impossible for him to attend to his Parliamentary duties as well as to his business. The social amenities of what has been called "The Best Club in Europe" held no charms for him. The machinery of debate, Parliamentary procedure and the Rules of the House, while they were studied with that careful conscientiousness which he brought to bear upon all his work, must have seemed tedious and unnecessarily elaborate to one accustomed to making up his mind quickly and seeing his instructions promptly carried out. In the course of the 1906 election he had told his prospective constituents that, in the event of his being returned, he would not allow business to interfere with the due performance of his Parliamentary duties, and that if, when the time came, he found it impossible to reconcile these rival claims, he would resign his position as their Member. He had not been in the House long before the demands of his business became even more insistent than he had expected, so he wrote early in December to his political chairman, Mr. Fergus Smith, to say that he had decided to apply for the Chiltern Hundreds. His political supporters received the news with consternation, for they had no alternative candidate in the field, and, had he carried out his intention, the possibility of still retaining Wirral, with its Conservative tendencies, as a Liberal seat would have been doubtful. Fortunately, the tactful management of the situation by the Chief Liberal Whip, Mr. George Whiteley (the late Lord Marchamley) prevented any such catastrophe to the Liberal cause. The high standard in Parliamentary

attendances which Lever considered it his duty to aim at is shown in a letter from the Chief Whip to Mr. Fergus Smith dated December 11th, 1906.

"During the last session," Mr. Whiteley wrote, "Mr. Lever's attendances have been most satisfactory, and the Whips have been extremely grateful to him for his support. I discovered in conversation that where the political shoe really pinches is in regard to next year—1907—when Mr. Lever's prospective business duties will be of such an onerous character as to prohibit him from attending regularly at the House. At the same time, I find that after the lapse of next year, the business demands upon his time will be reduced. I urged him strongly to retain his seat, and told him that for the next year we would waive all claim for continuous attendance, asking him to come up from time to time whenever the necessity arises. To make a long story short, he finally consented to adopt such a course. . . . Mr. Lever is extremely popular in the House, and has been a most excellent Member, and if we can get over the difficulty by the arrangement described, it will be satisfactory to all his friends in Wirral and, so far as the Whips' office is concerned, will be perfectly convenient and agreeable to us."

Lever loyally carried out the arrangement, but he gave timely warning to the Wirral Liberal Association that he could not again be their candidate, and so, when the next General Election came, he accepted an invitation to contest the Ormskirk Division of Lancashire. It was an even more unpropitious field than any in which he had hitherto fought, for the sitting Member was the Hon. Arthur Stanley, brother of Lord Derby, and an attack upon a Lancashire agricultural constituency represented by a member of the House of Stanley may certainly be described as a forlorn hope, if ever there was one. The result was a foregone conclusion, but in fighting the seat Lever had the satisfaction of slightly reducing the previous Conservative majority.

It is of interest, while touching upon Lever's life in the House of Commons, to recall a suggestion which he placed before the then First Commissioner of Works, Mr. Lewis Harcourt, for the building of a second "terrace." In the summer of 1908 a question was asked in Parliament as to the possibility of providing a verandah on the terrace to make it serviceable on wet days as well as fine; but the fear that such an addition would prove an architectural eyesore outweighed—and rightly so—the question of its convenience. The possibility of finding

some way round the difficulty was a problem which offered a strong attraction to Lever, and the solution which he submitted, in a letter to Mr. Harcourt, was that a second terrace should be built on columns, with groined roofing, above the existing one, the level of the new terrace to be some three feet below the Lobby Floor level of the House. Areas were to be left at certain points against the main wall of the House for giving light and air to the windows in the rooms overlooking the present terrace. It was suggested that the new terrace should be reserved exclusively for Members, the lower (covered) terrace being available for visitors accompanied by Members. "The House of Commons Terrace," Lever pointed out in his letter, "is seen by the majority of people from Westminster Bridge. From that point the terrace is below the level of the street, producing the effect of a three-storey building when only a two-storey building was intended by the architect." "I should not venture," he added, "to make the suggestion, if I believed that it would do other than improve the architectural effect as seen from Westminster Bridge." The suggestion was accompanied by an offer to have the necessary drawings made at his own expense in order that his ideas might be made clear, but the Chief Commissioner of Works was unable to carry the matter further.

Lever was not in the House of Commons long enough to win any great Parliamentary reputation; but his name will remain associated with two important measures which eventually found their way to the Statute Book—Old Age Pensions and the Payment of Members. His maiden speech was made on February 20th, 1906, in the course of the debate on the King's Speech, when he spoke in favour of old age pensions, urging that if funds were not available to provide pensions at sixty-five, they should commence at seventy years of age, or even at seventy-five, the great thing being that a start should be made with this much-needed reform. On March 7th, 1906, he spoke at some length on the subject of the payment of Members, and moved "that in the opinion of this House the time has now arrived when it is urgently required, in order to give every constituency an equal, free and unhampered selection of Parliamentary repretatives, that all Members of Parliament should be paid by the State a sum at the rate of £300 per annum." His main line of argument may be summed up in the dictum of Benjamin

Franklin, which he quoted at the beginning of his speech: "When Members of Parliament are paid they go to Parliament as a duty and not as a privilege." The figure of £300 a year was, he claimed, "an enabling salary" only and "could not be any inducement to the professional politician—the man who might wish to become a Member of Parliament for purely selfish ends—nor could it be any inducement to a Labour representative (he was using the term in its strictly accurate sense), for a working-man receiving thirty-six or forty shillings per week at the bench or in the mechanic's shop would be infinitely better off than a Member of Parliament receiving £300 a year and having to bear the expenses incidental to his position." His speech brought an interesting fact to light which came as a surprise to many, namely, that Members of Parliament had been paid in the past. A Sub-Committee of the House had been appointed in 1780, he said, to inquire into the question of payment of Members, and had recommended that Members should be paid on the ground that "it would be a return to the wholesome practice of former times." Payment of Members did not become law until 1911, when it was introduced as a Government measure. Lever was no longer in the House, but his reference to this Sub-Committee of 1780 caught the eye of Mr. Lloyd George, who as Chancellor of the Exchequer was responsible for the measure, and he wrote to Lever asking for the authority on which his statement had been based. Lever replied that he had found the fact stated in *The English Radicals*, by Roylance Kent, published in 1899, the exact quotation being, "A Sub-Committee at Westminster in 1780 recommended in their report that all Members serving in Parliament be entitled to reasonable wages according to the wholesome practice of ancient times." It appears that wages were first secured to Members by a statute of 1322, under which Knights of the Shire were paid four shillings a day and citizens and burgesses two shillings. The statute fell into desuetude, but in 1676 it was declared by the Courts to be still operative.

On the 10th of May, 1907, Lever was enabled, owing to good fortune in the ballot, to introduce, as a Private Member's Bill, a measure to provide old age pensions. In order that a start might immediately be made the Bill proposed to begin with pensions at the age of seventy-five, lowering the age to seventy

in the second year and sixty-five in the third year. The pension was to be available for everyone, but could only be obtained by personal application at a Post Office. This stipulation, he contended, would automatically limit the number who applied. It had been argued that pensions should be on a contributory basis, but this, he pointed out, would not be possible of application in many working-class homes. He knew of a case in a village in England which illustrated his point. He would not use any name, but he would give the woman to whom he referred the name of Betty Jones. She and her husband were of the agricultural labouring class, and never had more than 16s. a week. At one period the husband had no more than 12s. a week, and yet they brought up twelve children, the girls going out to service and the boys to work on farms. They were reared in a little cottage consisting of " a but " and " a ben," and all were doing well. For thirty years of her life this old lady declared she never set eyes on a sovereign piece. Now the husband was dead, and friends and neighbours had to keep her from going into the workhouse. Could she have saved anything for an old age pension ? All would agree that she and her husband had done their duty to the State. As a matter of fact, the village in question was Thornton Hough, and the woman's name really was Betty Jones, she being the widow mentioned in the description given of Thornton Hough in Chapter XIII. After a long debate the House divided, and the Second Reading of the Bill was carried by 232 votes to 19. It was not allowed, however, to proceed further, and when in the following year a Government measure for old age pensions was introduced, the pensions were to commence on the 1st of January, 1909, and be limited to persons over seventy years of age whose income was under £31 10s. a year. Lever took part in the debate on the Second Reading of this Bill, and advocated a graduated income tax as the fairest means of financing the measure.

Lever's last material contribution to the deliberations of the House was during the discussions on the Budget of 1909, when he once more spoke on the subject of payment to Members. " I feel," he said towards the end of his speech, " that it is only when all classes are freely and equally represented in this House that we can have knowledge of what is the feeling throughout the country."

There is an undercurrent running through all Lever's speeches in the House of Commons which clearly shows how singularly free his mind was of prejudices arising from sectional or class interests. I have referred elsewhere to his dislike of "class consciousness"—at either end of the social scale. He thought of mankind, not as divided horizontally into "classes," but as separated perpendicularly into, for example, the old and the young, the industrious and the idle, the triers and the indifferent. This outlook is reflected in all his speeches in the House. Old age pensions were to be for all who chose to apply for them; payment of Members was to be for all, and not, as some suggested, only for those Members who desired it. Income-tax was to be graduated so that all might feel the responsibility of contributing directly to the State in accordance with their means.

Although it occurred two years after Lever had ceased to be a Member of Parliament, it will be appropriate to refer here to the visit paid to Port Sunlight and Thornton Manor by Mr. and Mrs. Asquith on July 20th, 1912. On their way to Thornton Hough they drove through Port Sunlight, where an address of welcome on behalf of the community was presented to the Prime Minister by the late Edward Wainwright, who had performed a similar duty when Mr. Gladstone visited the village twenty-one years earlier. Mr. Asquith, in the course of his reply, made the following reference to Port Sunlight and its founder:—

"This place, with its amenities and beauties and its manifold comforts and attractions, is a splendid tribute to Sir William Lever. It is a tribute, I am sure, as Sir William will be the first to acknowledge, to those in every department of his business who have co-operated with him in building up one of the greatest industrial enterprises in the country. Here you live side by side, having a common interest, common spirit, pursuing common ends, and feeling, those of you who are workers, that you are not creating wealth which your labour helps to produce for the selfish enjoyment of others, but that you are participators in the fruits of what is earned. It is a splendid monument, it is a noble example, and I venture to congratulate you, one and all, from Sir William Lever down to the humblest of those who are co-operating with him, on the enormous contribution which you have made towards the solution of one of the most serious and formidable of our social questions."

At a political garden-party at Thornton Manor in the afternoon, Mr. Asquith delivered an important speech dealing with the tasks of the Liberal Government, especially with regard to

the reform of the House of Lords. All the leading Cabinet Ministers, and the Prime Minister in particular, were at that time receiving the undue attentions of the militant suffragettes. Before visiting Port Sunlight, Mr. Asquith had fulfilled a political engagement in Chester, and, when it was over, as the procession of cars was rounding Northgate Street, a suffragette threw a small bag of flour at what she believed to be the car in which the Prime Minister was sitting; but she aimed at the wrong one, and even failed to hit that. The incident, however, was turned to good account later in the day by Mr. (now Sir) Frank L. Joseph. "A lady suffragist," he said, "has presented our leader with the white flour of a blameless life." I call to mind another amusing scene which took place while Mr. Asquith was walking through the grounds at Thornton Manor. Two militant-looking women had managed to effect an entrance, and were seen advancing from the farther end of one of the garden walks. An elderly lady, standing not far from the Prime Minister, stepped forward with an open umbrella to protect him, at the same time exclaiming, "How dare you do this to the Premier of all England!" It was a well-intentioned counter-attack, but it is to be feared that she was somewhat confused in her mind between the offices of Prime Minister and Archbishop of Canterbury.

CHAPTER XVI

BOLTON AND RIVINGTON

ALTHOUGH my father had homes in Cheshire and London, and the claims upon his time in both places continued to grow, he never lost his affection for his native town of Bolton; in fact, as time passed he felt an increasing longing for the scenes of his boyhood, and a keen desire to keep alive and active his earlier friendships, and so he decided in 1898 to have once more a home in Bolton, and he bought a house called "Hillside" on the Chorley New Road. It goes almost without saying that he altered and enlarged the house, and twelve months elapsed before he went to reside there. Two years later he sold it to his sister, Mrs. Tillotson, and removed to the bungalow which he built on the slopes of Rivington Pike, and which will be referred to later.

Bolton received many gifts from her devoted son. I have already mentioned the church which he and his brother built in Blackburn Road as a tribute to their parents, and while this was principally a benefaction to his own denomination, it may justly, on account of its architectural beauty, be included amongst his gifts to the citizens as a whole. Four years later he built on the opposite side of the road a large Sunday-school with accommodation for six hundred scholars.

In the township of Tonge, which lies about two miles to the north-east of the centre of Bolton, there stands a picturesque manor house known as "Hall i' th' Wood" ("Hall in the Wood")—the earliest portion of which probably dates from 1483. The great historical interest attaching to the house lies in the fact that it was there that Samuel Crompton, who was born in 1753 at Firwood Fold, not far away, perfected, under conditions of great hardship and constant persecution, his spinning-mule, an invention which was to revolutionize the cotton industry and lay the foundation of Bolton's future prosperity. Lever had known "Hall i' th' Wood" well in his boyhood, for the house stood beside what was, in those days, a beautiful country lane

about a quarter of a mile from the highroad leading to Tonge Moor, the nearest expanse of open country to Bolton, and one of his favourite walks. He had always been fond of the building, which is certainly one of the choicest, although not one of the largest or best known of the old half-timbered manor houses of Lancashire and Cheshire—and finding that it had been falling into disrepair for some time, and that an effort to purchase it by private subscription had failed, he became determined to save it for his native town, and asked his friend, Jonathan Simpson, to approach the owner. A year later the purchase was completed, and the building, after being restored with careful discrimination, was presented by Lever to the Corporation of Bolton as a Museum to perpetuate Crompton's memory. In it were placed pictures and other objects having associations with the inventor, and Lever bought for the Museum from time to time various examples of furniture and household utensils belonging to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so that the public might gain some insight into the domestic life of the period in which the house was built. "Hall i' th' Wood" is, in fact, one of the very few folk-life museums in this country.

Of all the institutions in his native town, the one with which Lever's name will always remain most intimately associated is The Bolton School. The school, as it exists to-day, is made up of a Boys' division, originally the Bolton Grammar School, and a Girls' division, originally the Girls' High School. The Grammar School, which was founded in 1554, was rebuilt and endowed by a certain Robert Lever in 1641, and incorporated by Act of Parliament in the reign of George III. Those who framed this Act little knew, when they inserted a clause which read, "That as long as there shall be anyone of the Blood, Kindred and Name of the said Robert Lever, the founder, dwelling within the Town or Parish of Bolton aforesaid, or within Twenty miles thereof, who shall be deemed fit to be made Governors, they shall respectively be appointed Governors accordingly, in case of vacancy," how well they were serving the interests of the school over a century later, for it was under the terms of this clause that Lever was invited to become a Governor in 1898, shortly after he came to "Hillside." The school at that time stood behind the parish church, but the

building was quite inadequate for the increasing educational needs of the town, and the necessity for larger premises was at once apparent to Lever. Fortunately he was able to find a private house in Chorley New Road, easily adaptable to the purposes of a school, and this house he bought, altered and presented to the school in 1899. Two years later he built a swimming bath for the boys, and a little while afterwards a piece of land close by was bought by public subscription—Lever contributing a considerable amount—and laid out as playing-fields. Lever also bought and gave to the school a house in the neighbourhood to serve as a residence for the head master, and he acquired several other private houses to increase the accommodation of the school. He had in mind, however, a far larger scheme to meet its future needs, and in 1913 he gave it an endowment, taking the form of shares in Lever Brothers, and producing an annual income of £10,000, and he established a trust known as the Lever Trust to administer the fund. In 1920 this endowment was increased by a further similar amount, bringing the income of the Trust up to £20,000 a year. One of the conditions of the gift was that an amalgamation should be effected between the Grammar School and the Bolton High School for Girls, the united school being known thereafter as The Bolton School. Of the endowment, half was to be for the benefit of the Boys' division and half for the Girls' division, the balance of the income, after providing as much as was necessary towards the current expenses of the school, being set aside as a building fund for the erection, at a later date, of entirely new school buildings, which were to be built partly on the site of the existing school and partly on an adjoining piece of land which Lever had secured for the purpose. In 1902 he began giving annually a number of "Lever" scholarships which covered the fees and books of the scholars during the time they were at the school, and in 1920 he placed these scholarships upon a permanent basis by a further endowment which provided for eight scholarships in the Boys' division, with full fees and books, and for twenty-two in the Girls' division. Of the latter, four were at full fees, two at £18 a year, eight at £12 a year, one at £9 a year, and seven at £6 a year, in each case the provision of books being included; there was also one "leaving exhibition" on the Girls' side.

The Great War inevitably postponed the launching of Lever's larger scheme, for the cost of running the school became greater, and the income from the Lever Trust had to be drawn upon to a much larger extent than was originally contemplated, and the cost of building had also increased. In 1919, however, the Governors invited competitive designs for the new buildings, which, at Leverhulme's request, were to be Tudor in style and carried out in stone. There were to be separate school buildings and assembly halls for the two divisions, grouped round a central quadrangle, and in order that Bolton might have a school comparable in conception and architectural atmosphere with the older "public schools" his original plans included the provision of a school chapel, midway between the two divisions, and the assembly halls and classrooms were to be panelled in oak, and to have raftered roofs in the style of the halls of Oxford and Cambridge colleges. The winning design in the competition was by Mr. Charles Thomas Adshead, of Manchester, and so that a start, at any rate, might be made with the new buildings, Leverhulme in 1923 entered into an arrangement to contribute a further amount towards the cost of the building, but, alas! the foundations only were completed at the time of his death.

In writing of Lever's interests in Bolton during the period with which this chapter is mainly concerned, I must not omit to mention a movement of which he was in a large measure the originator and for many years the principal supporter—the Bolton Court and Alley Concerts Society, the purpose of which was to provide open-air concerts and other forms of entertainment in the poorest parts of the town. Lever had become familiar with the good results obtained in Liverpool by Mr. Lee Jones and his "League of Well-doers," who had been working on somewhat similar lines, and he impressed upon a number of social workers in Bolton, particularly an old school-friend named John F. Warbrick, the possibilities of such a scheme, with the result that the Society was founded in 1899. The concerts were provided by local musical organizations, including Church choirs of all denominations, brass bands, orchestras and concert parties, and during the first year Lever provided cinema exhibitions, which were then a great novelty, as "picture houses" had not yet come into existence. On several occasions he entertained all the members of the Society at his bungalow at Rivington and

once at Thornton Manor. The concerts not only gave pleasure to those who lived in the courts and alleys of Bolton, but attracted visitors from other parts of the town, and many leading citizens were in this way brought into touch with sections of the town which they had never seen before, and a more widespread appreciation of the need of better housing conditions ensued. Altogether about four hundred and fifty concerts were given, and when the movement came to an end in 1922 it was largely because the conditions which had brought the Society into being had ceased to exist.

In the spring of 1899 Lever was asked by the agents of Mr. John W. Crompton, of Rivington Hall, whether the purchase of the Rivington Hall Estate would interest him. The proposal appealed to him for many reasons: the estate, comprising many acres of wild moorland, was one of the most attractive stretches of country, still unspoiled, within easy reach of Bolton; it had been one of his favourite haunts as a boy, and the fact that his father had been educated at Rivington Grammar School increased his sentimental attachment to the neighbourhood. "Hillside," he was realizing, had limitations for one whose passionate hobby was the laying out of gardens, whereas Rivington was an ideal spot for the making of a garden in which his imagination could have full play. The rest of the estate, including the moors, he could offer to his native town as a park, and so ensure the preservation of its beauties for the benefit of the public, for Rivington Pike, some 1,200 feet above sea-level, and one of the highest landmarks in this part of Lancashire, had long been a favourite resort of the people of Bolton and the surrounding towns, especially on Bank Holidays, and by throwing open the greater part of the Rivington Hall Estate he could increase their opportunities for enjoyment by giving them access to a larger area of land. But in the valley to the south of the Pike lie the Rivington Reservoirs, which are one of the sources of Liverpool's water supply, and Lever naturally felt that the Liverpool Corporation was entitled to have the first opportunity of purchasing the estate. Mr. Crompton's agent, however, informed him that it had been offered to the Corporation many times during the previous twenty years, and that the reply had always been that they were not interested—at any rate, at the price which the Crompton family were asking. Lever, however, still felt that

he should not buy the land unless the Corporation were once more given the opportunity of acquiring it, and so Mr. Crompton's solicitors informed the Corporation that they had a firm offer for the estate, but that the intending purchaser considered that the Corporation should in the first place be given the opportunity of buying it, at the same price, if they wished to do so. The reply again was that Liverpool did not wish to acquire it. Lever then completed the purchase, and proceeded to carry out the intentions which had been in his mind. The site which he chose for his home was just below the summit of the Pike, and without delay he commenced building, his house taking the form of a bungalow built entirely of wood and with a tiled roof —a simple unpretentious building, and one admirably adapted to its surroundings.

In September 1901 Lever left England on a voyage to Australia, but a few days before sailing he arranged that during his absence his friend Jonathan Simpson, his Bolton solicitor Mr. James Hulton, and his estate agent Mr. F. W. Thompson should convey his offer of the park to the Mayor and Corporation of Bolton. He took this course so that the announcement, with its attendant publicity, should take place while he was abroad. The triumvirate readily carried out the mission entrusted to them, and in due course, at a special meeting of the Council, the gift was gratefully accepted on behalf of the citizens of Bolton. In the meantime, before Lever had sailed for Australia, his agent had seen the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, the Town Clerk and the Waterworks Engineer, to inform them of the intention to present the park to Bolton, and had obtained their cordial approval.

Events seemed to be proceeding happily until the spring of 1902, when the Liverpool Corporation promoted a Bill before Parliament to obtain powers to acquire certain areas comprised in the Rivington watershed, including the estate which Lever had bought, and only bought, it will be remembered, after first giving to Liverpool the opportunity of purchasing it. The Bill came before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, of which Mr. Charles Bill was chairman, and Mr. J. H. Whitley, the present Speaker, a member, on May 1st, and the hearing lasted thirteen days, Lever being only one of twenty-five petitioners against the Bill. Parliament eventually gave the Corporation

THE HILL, HAMPSTEAD

THORNTON MANOR

the powers asked for, with the qualifications that Lever was to retain, under certain restrictions, the land occupied by the bungalow and its grounds—some forty-five acres—and that the proposed park was to remain a park for the benefit of the public, only under the ownership of Liverpool instead of Bolton, and that it was to be known as "Lever Park." This last proviso was a decision of the Select Committee and not a wish expressed by the giver.

It was in connection with this Bill that Lever first came into close touch with the late George Harley, whose firm, Simpson, North, Harley & Co., acted as his solicitors. He had asked his colleague, Robert Barrie, if he could introduce him to "a strong fighting solicitor" in Liverpool, and Barrie, knowing of the high reputation which Harley had won for himself in commercial circles, without hesitation recommended him, and in this way there began between Lever and Harley, not only a professional relationship, but also a close personal friendship. Were I asked to name the friendships which, for their own sakes, my father valued most, I would place George Harley's amongst the first half-dozen; and were I invited to mention the men upon whose counsel and advice he placed the greatest reliance, I know of no name which I would place in front of Harley's. Harley recommended to Lever as junior counsel in his petition against the Liverpool Corporation Bill a young barrister on the Northern Circuit, Mr. F. E. Smith, now the Earl of Birkenhead. F. E. Smith was at that time rapidly coming into local prominence as a keen politician and a barrister for whom a brilliant future was predicted. Harley, who had formed a high opinion of his ability, gave him several of his early briefs, and Lord Birkenhead has himself acknowledged the encouragement and help thus given to him at the beginning of his career.

The question of the price to be paid by the Liverpool Corporation for the Rivington Estate had been left to the decision of an arbitrator to be mutually agreed upon by the two parties; and, in the event of their failing to agree upon an arbitrator, the matter was to be decided by an umpire appointed by the Board of Trade. Wishing to avoid further litigation if possible, Lever again expressed his willingness to accept the price which he had originally paid for the estate, together with the expenses

he had incurred since its acquisition. The Corporation, however, declined his offer, and, the two parties having failed to find an arbitrator acceptable to both sides, the Board of Trade appointed as umpire Mr. C. E. Middleton, M.Inst.C.E., who was assisted by Mr. Robert Fidgers, F.S.I., and Mr. Edward Boyle, K.C. The case was heard at the Surveyors' Institute, Westminster, in July 1904, Mr. Asquith, as he then was, being leading counsel for the claimant and Mr. Balfour Browne for the Corporation. Having endeavoured to meet the Corporation with fairness from the beginning, and being not a little surprised at their refusal of his renewed offer, Lever saw before him no course but to fight the case as strenuously as he could. After a patient hearing lasting for six days, followed by a visit to Rivington and a personal examination on the spot of the intricate technicalities which were involved, the umpire decided that the Corporation should pay, as purchase money and compensation, a sum falling not far short of double the price which Lever had originally paid for the whole estate. It was an unmistakable victory, but one which could hardly be popular amongst the ratepayers of Liverpool, and there is no doubt that the affair gave rise, at the time, to a certain measure of local feeling unfavourable to Lever, whose repeated efforts to consider the claims of the Corporation had probably never been fully realized by the public. The fact that he had several times offered the estate for very much less than the umpire's figure seemed only to prejudice the Corporation further ; for, instead of accepting the award, they appealed against the decision, advancing as one of their main reasons the argument that Mr. Middleton was ill at the time and not in a fit state of mind to pronounce judgment. The appeal was heard by Mr. Justice Warrington in April 1905, and the award was upheld, as it was clearly proved during the hearing that, although the umpire had had a serious illness about the time of the arbitration, he had signed his award before he had been taken ill. "I confess," said Mr. Justice Warrington, "that from the facts I have heard to-day, I am surprised that such a body as the Liverpool Corporation should have put such a plea as that on record. I can only say that there is not a particle of evidence to support it." Thus the matter finally ended and the park was thrown open to the public, Lever inviting his old schoolmaster, W. T. Mason, then

living at Abergele in North Wales, to perform the inaugural ceremony.

Although the ownership of the park was vested in Liverpool, Lever remained free to carry out—at his own expense—many of his intentions with regard to road-making and increasing the attractions of the place in various ways. From first to last he did a great deal to add to the charm and interest of Rivington. Several of the fields he enclosed with wire fencing to form paddocks in which he placed deer, Indian cattle, wallaby, emus and other animals, his last contribution of this kind being a herd of Chartley cattle, the original native breed belonging to these islands. He carefully restored a fine example of a fourteenth-century tithe-barn to form a large tea-house where the public could obtain refreshments, and where parties of visitors could be catered for. Rivington Hall, when the Crompton family left it, he converted, with the approval of the Liverpool Corporation, into a museum, placing there, on loan, a collection of furniture and pictures which he opened to the public free of charge. But the most original contribution which he made to Rivington was the erection, on the shore of the main reservoir, of an exact replica of the ruins of Liverpool Castle. One associates such a quaint enterprise as the building of a ruin with America rather than England, and amongst Englishmen Lever was one of the few men—perhaps the only man—whom one can imagine carrying out such a scheme. He began building the ruin about 1912, but the work proceeded slowly, only a few stonemasons and labourers being engaged, and he never lived to see its completion. Already the newness is wearing off, and it will not be long before Nature has speckled the stones with lichen, filled the crannies with moss, and paved the courtyard with grass, so that the uninitiated will not know that the replica is not a genuine ruin. Several of the new roads which Lever made in the park converge upon one side of the ruin, while the outer walls, on the other side, rise sheer above the waters of the lake. As a bold experiment in landscape design it has certainly succeeded, and those who believed that Lever, when he first planned it, was drawing a bow at a venture, must admit that he has hit the mark.

The old Liverpool Castle disappeared long ago to make way for the city's commercial development, and future generations

will be grateful, one hopes, for this careful reconstruction of a piece of bygone Liverpool, and they may see in it, too, a reminder of Liverpool's responsibility for the custody of Lever Park, and all the opportunities for recreation and enjoyment which it affords to the people of Bolton and neighbouring towns, upon whose industry the prosperity of the port in no small measure depends.

Lever built his first bungalow at Rivington when it seemed likely that he would remain in undisturbed possession of the estate. An excellent quarry of hard, grey stone existed near by, and was made full use of for the garden terraces and the "crazy-paving" of the numerous paths; the house, however, Lever built of wood, partly because he contemplated the possibility of building a larger one later on in another part of the estate, but mainly because he was anxious to remove from "Hillside" as soon as possible in order to give his personal attention to the making of the garden and the laying out of the park. Until the litigation with the Liverpool Corporation was over his plans with regard to the gardens had to remain in abeyance, and it was not until 1905 that he could commence in earnest the making of that unique moorland garden, with its terraces, garden houses and pigeon cotes, its level lawns hewn out of the rocky hill-side, and its artificial lakes, cascades and waterfalls—a creation reminding one of Edgar Allan Poe's fantasy, *The Domain of Arnheim*.

On the 10th of November, 1902, Lever was presented with the Honorary Freedom of Bolton in recognition of his commercial achievements and his benefactions to his native town. "We certainly are the creatures of environment," he said in his reply acknowledging the presentation. "Whatever I have been able to do in business, on a larger scale, you may depend upon it that the foundations were laid here in Bolton, under the training of my father and mother." In his own mind Lever never looked upon his gifts to Bolton and his public work there in any other light than as the repayment of a debt—the debt which every man owes to his native town, not because he happens to have been born there, but because, in most cases, it has provided the influences and opportunities of his early and formative years.

CHAPTER XVII

A NEWSPAPER ATTACK AND ITS SEQUEL

IN 1895, the year after Lever Brothers' incorporation as a public company, the raw materials used in the manufacture of soap entered upon an era of low prices. This happy state of affairs was followed, however, by a period of higher prices, which became abnormal in the year 1901 and the opening months of 1902. By careful management and skilful buying Lever was able to ride successfully over the crest of this wave of high productive costs and reach the trough beyond without raising the price of his commodity. But in 1906 prices rose to a yet higher level, and British soap manufacturers were competing more vigorously than they had ever done before, not only in the raw material markets, but also in the heavy volume and amazing variety of their advertising campaigns.

The soap trade, like most other industries, possessed its own Association—in fact, it had four: the Northern Soap-makers' Association, a similar body for London and the South, together with one for Scotland and another for Ireland. These Associations had functioned for a number of years with considerable success, but Lever saw that no conferences round a table, however well intentioned, could solve the problem which faced the soap trade and rescue it from the *impasse* which it had now reached. He knew that the only sane remedy lay in a curtailment of the heavy working expenses of the various makers and in a reasonable increase in the price of their commodities to the public. "All my experience has shown me," he said at the time, "that these objects cannot be achieved except by some working arrangement being arrived at with the principal firms in the trade." Accordingly, in July 1906 he met by arrangement in Liverpool the principal directors of Messrs. William Gossage & Sons, of Widnes, Joseph Watson & Sons, of Leeds, and Joseph Crosfield & Sons, of Warrington, and suggested to them that an interchange of shares should take place which, by establishing a community of interest, would enable the difficulties which faced them to be

overcome. Into the exact details of the proposed arrangement it is unnecessary to enter. Broadly speaking, the majority of the Ordinary shares and some of the Preference shares of the firms concerned were to be exchanged partly for Ordinary shares and partly for Preference and Preferred Ordinary shares in Lever Brothers. As a result of this meeting the directors present, after they had consulted their respective Ordinary shareholders, accepted Lever's suggestion, and finally the proposed amalgamation included nine of the leading firms in Great Britain and Ireland.

As the financial arrangements affected no one except the Ordinary shareholders in the respective concerns, who had all been individually consulted, no formal announcement was immediately necessary. In the autumn, however, news of the intended amalgamation gradually became public property, and paragraphs began to appear in the newspapers. Generally speaking, however, they were by no means unfriendly to the scheme. The foremost paper to give publicity to the arrangement was the *Daily Mail*, but in this case one could detect an increasing tendency to adverse criticism. That the new departure was engaging the serious attention of Lord Northcliffe himself was shown by the following letter received by Lever in the middle of October :—

"'DAILY MAIL,'
"LONDON.
"*18th October*, 1906.

"W. H. LEVER, ESQ.,
"LONDON, E.C.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am authorized by Lord Northcliffe to convey to you his sincere assurance that in dealing in the columns of the *Daily Mail* with the question of the Soap Manufacturers' Amalgamation, it is the aim and intention to maintain the strictest impartiality and in no sense to take sides.

"In quoting the views of dealers and in giving publicity to the correspondence reaching us on this subject, the *Daily Mail* assumes no attitude of hostility towards your firm or any other, but, in the pursuit of its duty as a public newspaper, desires to lay before its readers with perfect fairness all sides of the question.

"Lord Northcliffe has expressed the hope that you, sir, will not deem the attitude of the *Daily Mail* at any period of this matter's history unfriendly to your firm. I am empowered to assure you that the contrary would better express the feeling.

"I am, dear Sir,
"Faithfully yours,
"T. L. GRAHAME."

The letter was dated the 18th of October, and it was difficult to reconcile it with the same day's issue of the *Daily Mail*, in which the paper had shown unmistakably a hostile attitude. Lever replied to the letter as follows :—

" SUNLIGHT WHARF,
" UPPER THAMES STREET,
" LONDON, E.C.
" *19th October*, 1906.

" MR. T. L. GRAHAME,
" EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT,
" 'DAILY MAIL,'

" DEAR SIR,

" I am obliged for your letter of the 18th.

" Please thank Lord Northcliffe for the message he has instructed you to convey to me, and I assure him that I never for a moment thought that a high-class newspaper could be actuated by any other desire than perfect accuracy and impartiality.

" If there is any point which arises where I can be of assistance in ensuring accuracy, I shall be very glad at any time to hear from you.

" Yours faithfully,
" W. H. LEVER."

On the following day, October 20th, the attack of the *Daily Mail* and allied newspapers began in deadly earnest, and startling paragraphs containing charges of fraudulent trading and bad treatment of employees appeared in succeeding issues of the paper. The attack continued with increasing bitterness as days and weeks went by until, gathering force under its own momentum, it reached a pitch which was probably beyond the original intention of the authors themselves. Several other papers were critical, although in a milder manner, but the attitude of the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Times* was one of exemplary fairness throughout those stormy days, the latter publishing in its Financial and Commercial Supplement of October 29th a review of the situation which, had it appeared in a medium more widely read by the masses of the people, might have done much to allay the rising tide of public anxiety and alarm. Its concluding paragraph well expresses the opinion of anyone able, amid the storm of hostile propaganda which was raging at the time, to take a reasoned and unbiased view of the position :—

" If soap costs more to make now than it did a year ago the public must pay more for it, and this must happen whether the present Soap Combination breaks up or not, but if economies can be effected by

reasonable combination among makers, it is not very wise of the public to object, especially as the combinations possible in this country are so severely limited in the scope of their ambitions. When, if ever, we have to fight in this country a real monopolist Trust we shall need all the moral force of public condemnation which is at present being dissipated in needless cries of 'Wolf!' But if 'wolf' is cried too often the real danger, when it comes, may be unheeded.

Lever faced the storm with dignified and restrained silence, believing that the wisest course for himself and the firms associated with him was to carry out, undeterred by this attack, the policy upon which they had agreed. At first, orders were actually larger than before, as one of the results of the campaign was to make the grocers believe that an increase in the price of soap was imminent. Very soon, however, the demand began to fall off rapidly, making it clear that the continuance of the newspaper attacks was having a profound effect upon the public mind.

Towards the end of November two of the principal firms concerned decided, in view of the grave situation which had arisen, to withdraw from the arrangement, the legal formalities of which had not yet been finally carried through. Lever then called a meeting of all the parties interested, and, after some discussion, a resolution declaring the amalgamation at an end was submitted and carried unanimously. Even then, however, the attacks did not cease, and Lever, who had borne the main brunt of them throughout, now felt that his only course was to issue a writ for libel against the newspapers concerned. He was told in London that owing to the state of public feeling a jury would be unlikely to give a verdict in his favour, but a different view was held in Liverpool and Port Sunlight, and Harley laid the case before Mr. F. E. Smith, who, after sitting up most of the night studying the papers, gave the following brief but emphatic opinion: "There is no defence to this action; the damages must be enormous." The case came on for hearing in the Nisi Prius Court at the Liverpool Assizes before Mr. Justice Lawrence and a special jury on July 15th, 1907, and aroused nation-wide interest, not only on account of the events so fresh in the public mind, round which the case centred, but also by reason of the brilliant array of counsel appearing for both sides. For the plaintiffs—Lever Brothers—appeared Sir Edward Carson, K.C. (now Lord Carson); Mr. Horridge, K.C. (now Mr. Justice Horridge);

Mr. F. E. Smith (Lord Birkenhead), then Member of Parliament for the Walton Division of Liverpool; and Mr. E. G. Hemmerde, who at that time sat as Liberal Member for East Denbigh and two years later became Recorder of Liverpool. Mr. Rufus Isaacs, K.C. (now the Marquis of Reading), was leading counsel for the defendants, and with him were Mr. H. E. Duke, K.C. (now Lord Merivale, President of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division), Mr. Norman Craig and Mr. Branson (now Mr. Justice Branson). It will be of interest, at this point, to recall a conversation which took place between Mr. Rufus Isaacs and Lever a few days before the trial. Running across him in the Lobby of the House of Commons, Mr. Isaacs suggested to Lever that he supposed he must now regard him (Mr. Isaacs) as his enemy. "Why?" Lever inquired. Mr. Isaacs then reminded him that he held a brief for his opponents. "I am sure you only want to get at the truth," said Lever, "and no one who desires to do that can be an enemy of mine." Before long these words were to come true.

The whole of the first day of the trial and part of the second were occupied with Sir Edward Carson's opening speech, a clear and lucid description of the events which had led to the proposed amalgamation and an emphatic contradiction of the statements which had appeared in the defendants' newspapers. On the second day, at the conclusion of Sir Edward's speech, which had lasted altogether for five hours, Lever went into the witness-box for his examination-in-chief by Mr. Horridge. With an earnestness which left little doubt in the minds of those present, he repudiated in the clearest manner possible the accusations which had been made against him, his answers time after time being, with but slight variation, the same: "A lie," "Another lie," "Absolutely false," "A most unblushing lie." Shortly after the adjournment for lunch Mr. Rufus Isaacs rose to cross-examine. One of the most brilliant cross-examiners at the Bar, a man of business experience himself and well known to be at his best when dealing with commercial cases, he can seldom have been faced with a more hopeless task than when he endeavoured, during the remainder of that July afternoon, in the hot and heavy atmosphere of the crowded court, to lead the witness to make some admission which might bring a ray of hope to the side he was representing.

The following morning a dramatic and unexpected development took place, for when the Judge took his seat Mr. Rufus Isaacs at once rose and announced that, in view of Lever's statements in the witness-box on the previous day and his manner and demeanour in giving evidence, it was impossible for his clients to persist in the charges made against him. "I withdraw unreservedly," he said, "every imputation which has been made upon Mr. Lever's honour and integrity, and on behalf of my clients I say that they much regret they have been misled into making statements which appear to have reflected so closely upon him." At the conclusion of this speech Sir Edward Carson pointed out that he could not accept, as in any sense adequate to the injury done, the withdrawal which had been made, and said that he must appeal to the jury to redress, as far as was in their power, the harm which had been done. The case did not go to the jury, however, for, after a brief adjournment, Mr. Rufus Isaacs announced that the defendants had agreed to pay the sum of £50,000, and Mr. Justice Lawrence returned a formal verdict with damages at that figure. Sensational as the award was, for it exceeded any sum hitherto awarded in a libel action, it fell far short of the actual loss which had been sustained. It was, however, a figure which could leave no doubt in the mind of the public as to the plaintiff's complete vindication.

Lever received a warm ovation when the announcement was made in Court and a rousing reception greeted him when he left the building. News of the victory quickly spread to Port Sunlight, where it occasioned great rejoicing, and a message was at once sent to Lever asking that some opportunity might be given to the employees of expressing their feelings. The rest of the day became a general holiday in the village, and in the afternoon a meeting of the work-people was held in the Auditorium. The building, which can normally seat three thousand people, was packed to overflowing, and the reception which met Mr. and Mrs. Lever on their arrival was a reaction from many months of suppressed indignation and a spontaneous expression of the staff's sympathy for their chief in the trial from which he had at last successfully emerged.

The trial in Liverpool was followed by one in Scotland against certain Scottish newspapers owned by the defendants, and altogether the total damages which were awarded amounted to

£91,000. Lever, however, did not use this money either for himself or his business, but used a portion of it towards the purchase of the Old Blue Coat School in Liverpool, one of the City's oldest and most beautiful buildings. The balance he gave to the University of Liverpool as an endowment for the School of Tropical Medicine, the School of Town Planning and Civic Design (which for a while made the Old Blue Coat School its headquarters) and the School of Russian Studies. The Old Blue Coat School he renamed Liberty Building and placed there, and also in the Library of the University, an album containing a full account of the litigation, the judgment and the agreement embodying the final settlement. This he did in order that there might be a permanent record of the action he had fought in vindication of the right of an individual to manage his own affairs without undue interference from the Press.

It will be remembered that Lever, not long after his election, had thought of giving up his Parliamentary work and applying for the Chiltern Hundreds, but now that the trial was over and he was faced with the immediate problem of restoring the losses which his business had suffered, he was even less inclined to go back to the House. A letter from his friend, George Harley, probably did much to make him change his mind.

"I was dismayed last evening," Harley wrote, "to hear you say you were not going up to the House, and I want, if I possibly can, to urge you to go, and to go next week. I am aware you dislike anything in the nature of a demonstration incident to yourself—but may I put it to you that it is a duty which you owe to yourself and to all associated with you, and the people of Wirral? The battle you have been fighting is, in one sense, purely a personal one, but—in another and a much wider sense—a national one. It has interested the whole country. You like candid talk and therefore I am speaking openly and candidly to you, as I would prefer to do, and therefore I say plainly you have been under a cloud for some months past. You told me yourself that you had a feeling some Members of the House rather shunned talking to you about the facts of the case, and that your view—rightly or wrongly—was that they had a feeling that perhaps there was a something which justified the *Daily Mail*. This has all gone and been driven away as it were by a whirlwind, and everyone, particularly those referred to, would be the first to acknowledge that you had acted the manly part, and I think it only right that this opportunity should be afforded them."

Lever returned to his Parliamentary duties on the 22nd of July, and on entering the House received from all quarters an

ovation which has had but few parallels. The following description of the incident is taken from the *Daily Telegraph* of the following day :—

"The hero of yesterday's sitting in the House of Commons, writes our Parliamentary correspondent, came into evidence in a wholly unpremeditated, unheralded and unexpected manner. A shy, unobtrusive, reluctant hero, he asked no questions, he made no speech. His name figured on no notice paper; he traversed no rule of order. A happy-faced man with the glow of the country sun upon him, Mr. William Hesketh Lever, Radical representative of the Wirral Division of Cheshire, slipped in quietly while questions were being asked, and sought to hide himself in a remote corner far below the gangway dividing Ministers and their supporters. But the first glimpse of one who has been absent from his Parliamentary labours for a whole week, the sight of his beaming visage, the detection of his modest and retiring personality, acted upon the House of Commons as a match acts upon gunpowder.

"Ministers have had fine receptions on returning from conquest or defeat. New-comers on their debut, old friends on their reappearance have provoked stirring party cheers, but we cannot recall any outburst analogous to that which greeted Mr. Lever yesterday. The whole House broke into full cry—Radicals, Unionists, Orangemen, Nationalists and Labour men joined in common chorus of sympathetic cordiality. Mr. Lever flushed with gratification and bent his head in gratitude. The House shouted again, and then a diplomatic Member beckoned the honourable gentleman to a more comfortable position. No sooner had he risen to accept the offer than the kindly demonstration was renewed. Whereupon Mr. Lever, beaming more brightly than ever, stood up and literally 'bowed his acknowledgments' amid cries of 'Bravo!' A remarkable and unprecedented incident in the modern history of Parliament and a compliment the more to be prized by reason of its spontaneity and generous sincerity."

With this gratifying evidence that the cloud, under which for the past nine months he had felt himself to be living, had at last rolled by, ended the long and bitter controversy which the Northcliffe Press had embarked upon under—to quote the words of a leading article in the *Daily Mail* after the trial was over—"a no doubt mistaken sense of public duty."

Those tempestuous days have long since passed, and while, in writing the life of Lord Leverhulme, memories of them must of necessity be revived, one is glad to think that, during the lifetimes of both the chief protagonists, the hatchet was buried and friendly relations were happily restored.

CHAPTER XVIII

CO-PARTNERSHIP

TWENTY years before the Co-partnership Trust in Lever Brothers became a reality, the question of profit-sharing had been engaging my father's attention. On the whole his earlier studies of the problem led him to the conclusion that on a purely cash basis it was not a practical possibility. By creating the village of Port Sunlight and its amenities, he had introduced a measure of profit-sharing in kind, if not in cash, and as far back as 1894 he had drawn up a scheme under which a block of Ordinary shares was to be placed in trust for the benefit of the employees; but owing to certain legal technicalities the scheme had been abandoned. The problem, however, continued to occupy his mind, and, in 1900, he spoke his thoughts aloud in a lecture entitled "Prosperity versus Profit-sharing in Relation to Workshop Management," which he gave at a meeting of the Birkenhead Literary and Scientific Society in November of that year. This address—a paper read to the comparatively small audience of a local literary society—is of great interest to-day as showing the point he had arrived at when a little more than half-way through the twenty years of careful thought which led to the introduction of Lever Brothers' Co-partnership Scheme. A few extracts will serve to show the conclusions he had then reached:

"If prosperity-sharing or profit-sharing do not have a beneficial effect in relation to workshop management, then they are charity, and, as such, would be most properly resented by every true workman. If, on the other hand, prosperity-sharing or profit-sharing give the employee a greater interest in his work and make him a better man, then they are proved to pay, and their practice becomes a sound business system, and their general adoption is assured, with corresponding advantages to all concerned.

"In order to study fairly and accurately this question, we will commence with a consideration of that hackneyed expression, 'Capital and Labour.' Never have two words been less understood. To make them understood and connect them together you must add the word 'Management,' and make the phrase read, 'Capital, Management and Labour.'

"Adam Smith is largely responsible for the antagonism of Labour towards Capital through his statement that Labour is the source of all wealth. During a century, that saying has been accepted as the final word on the subject, and as an axiom in political economy. A greater mistake was never made, nor one that has had more prejudicial effects on the minds of trade unionists and working men generally. Labour of itself can never produce wealth—in fact, it will barely produce sufficient to feed, clothe and house the labourer. But if Labour is well directed, if the fairy of good management appears on the scene, all is changed, and Labour can and does produce wealth beyond the dreams of avarice.

"Labour, in effect, says to Management, 'I cannot afford to stand any of the financial risks of this undertaking. Nay, I cannot risk even payment for my labour. You must treat me as the first mortgage on the business and see that I get paid in full.'

"We must have some system more suitable than bonus cheques, which vary in amount from year to year, and cease altogether in years of bad trade, with all the consequent disappointment and distrust on the part of Labour which this entails. In order to carry this into effect, some reservoir must be created to which the share of profits belonging to Labour can be stored during prosperous years, to be more evenly applied than would otherwise be possible."

This reservoir, in Lever's own case, was the village of Port Sunlight, built and added to year by year out of the profits of the business, and which, when once built, was there for the benefit of those engaged in the industry in lean times as well as in prosperous ones. But, valuable as this form of prosperity-sharing proved to be in itself, and as a contribution to the progress of the business, he still continued his search for some means whereby those employed in the undertaking could share in the profits not only indirectly, but also directly, in a monetary sense. He found the solution—as is so often the case in solving difficulties—not in any new device, but in the adaptation to new conditions of a system and practice of great antiquity, namely "Partnership." Ever since men and communities first began to trade and barter with each other, in the earliest stages of civilization, the idea of partnership has been in existence, and Partnership implies the sharing of the proceeds of business not only in prosperous years, but in lean years as well. The basis of Lever's scheme was that the employees were to become co-partners with the Ordinary shareholders—of which there was at that time only one, namely himself—and share with them in the surplus profits of the business after the payment of dividends to the Preference and Preferred

Ordinary shareholders. After several consultations with his solicitor, George Harley, at which the proposals were considered in all their bearings, and especially in relation to the various Acts which govern the procedure of Limited Companies, the scheme took final shape and was made public on February 25th, 1909, in an address which Lever gave at a meeting in the Auditorium attended by those employees who were eligible to participate. In this memorable speech he told his audience how he had been making a study of the problem for over twenty years. He referred to the remarks he had made at the dinner which had followed the cutting of the first sod in 1888, and to his speech at Beaumaris in 1890, and he traced the evolution which had been taking place in his mind ever since these early pronouncements upon the subject of Prosperity-sharing. He reminded his audience of the paper he had read before the Birkenhead Literary and Scientific Society in 1900, and then, after alluding to a system of representative committees which he had inaugurated in the year 1899, to give to the employees an increasing interest in their work and conditions of employment, he turned to his new proposals.

"I have looked for my model," he said, "to the oldest working arrangement which has ever existed in business—the ordinary partnership. Men in the old days entered a firm as errand boys; they worked up to the desk; then to the management; and were finally taken in as partners and made their positions. There was a day when I was taken into partnership, and there was a day, in the old-fashioned business, when those who worked with the proprietor, either as manager or in some other position, were taken into partnership. An account was then opened in their names in the books of their firm, and an arrangement was entered into that they should have a definite share of the profits. Under the old-fashioned partnership arrangement the partner who had provided the capital was invariably credited with 5 per cent. on his capital; so that the first charge against the profits was 5 per cent. upon the capital of the undertaking; after that the balance was divided in some proportion agreed upon between the partners."

He then showed how he intended to adapt this time-honoured principle to his own business. A trust was to be formed called the "Co-partnership Trust in Lever Brothers, Ltd.," of which the directors were to be the trustees. Co-partnership certificates of the nominal value of £500,000 were to be created and issued, each Co-partnership share being of the nominal value of one pound. To qualify as a co-partner, an employee, of either sex,

had to be not less than twenty-five years of age and to have completed five years' service with the Company. Co-partners were to be divided into the following four classes: Directors, Management, Salesmen and Staff, and in each class the total issued certificates were not to exceed one-quarter of the whole. The maximum nominal value of any one individual's holding of certificates was to be £3,000 in the case of the Management and Salesmen classes and £800 in the Staff class, while in the case of the directors the amount was to be fixed by the holders of the Ordinary shares. In addition to these certificates "Co-partnership Preferential Certificates," bearing a fixed dividend of 5 per cent., were to be created, and co-partners who retired on reaching the age of sixty-five in the case of men, and sixty in the case of women, or who left the business through no act of their own, were to have their Co-partnership certificates converted into these Preferential certificates. If a co-partner or Preferential certificate holder were to die leaving a widow, his Co-partnership certificates were to be converted into Preferential certificates for her benefit during widowhood, or if the husband had been a Preferential certificate holder, then his certificates were to be automatically transferred to the widow. A Co-partnership Committee was to be formed, consisting of twelve members, three being elected by the Management co-partners, three by the Salesmen co-partners, three by the Staff co-partners and three by the Preferential certificate holders. An employee, when qualified by age and length of service to become a co-partner, was to have the right to apply to be made one, his application in the first place going before the Trustees, with a right of appeal to the Co-partnership Committee, and ultimately to the "Majority Holder." On being admitted to co-partnership, the employee was to sign an undertaking that he would in all respects abide by the provisions of the Co-partnership Trust Deed and not "waste time, labour, materials or money in the discharge of his duties, but loyally and faithfully further the interests of Lever Brothers and its associated companies and his fellow-co-partners to the best of his skill and ability."

Co-partnership certificates were to be liable to cancellation in the event, on the part of the holder, of neglect of duty, dishonesty, intemperance, immorality, wilful misconduct, flagrant inefficiency, disloyalty to his employers, or a breach of the above-

mentioned undertaking. Should it happen that an employee was refused admission to co-partnership, or had his "scrip" cancelled, he was to have the right to lay his case, in the first instance, before the Co-partnership Committee, then, if necessary, before the Trustees, and finally, if he wished to appeal against their judgment, before the "Majority Holder," whose decision was to be final.

In themselves the Co-partnership certificates were to be of no monetary value, but simply documents entitling the possessor to a dividend at whatever rate might from time to time be declared, and with regard to this rate of dividend, the future annual profits of the Company were to be distributed as follows: First of all, the necessary dividends were to be paid to the holders of Preference and Preferred Ordinary shares, this being the first requirement under the Company's constitution. Out of the profits then remaining a dividend of 5 per cent. was to be paid on the Ordinary shares of the Company, then the dividend of 5 per cent. on the Preferential Co-partnership certificates, and the balance was then to be divided between the Ordinary shareholders and the co-partners on an equal percentage basis. For example, when the earnings of the business permitted of a total Ordinary dividend of 10 per cent., the co-partners' dividend was to be 5 per cent., while, if the total Ordinary dividend was 15 per cent., the Co-partnership dividend was to be 10 per cent., and so on.

Since its inauguration, the scheme has been modified in detail—in every case to the advantage of the co-partners—and enlarged in scope. Originally, the number of co-partners was 1,041, and the nominal value of their certificates £113,650. At the time of the founder's death the number had increased to 18,000 (including co-partners in many of the associated companies at home and overseas), and the nominal value of the certificates issued amounted to £2,352,548, while the number of Preferential certificate holders was 740 and the nominal value of their holdings £407,080. In the year 1916 the qualifying age for co-partnership was reduced from twenty-five years to twenty-two, and the period of service from five years to four, but in 1920 and each succeeding year Lever, under powers reserved to him in the Trust Deed, caused certificates to be issued to employees of twenty-one years of age and one year's service. The practice was also introduced, a little while after the launching of the scheme, of paying the

Co-partnership dividends not, except in special cases, in cash, but in 5 per cent. (later increased to 8 per cent.) Preferred Ordinary shares. These shares, if the recipient desired, could be converted into cash, but if he kept the shares, he received either 5 (and later 8) per cent., or the same rate of dividend as was paid on the Co-partnership certificates, whichever was the greater.

Every autumn a large gathering was held in the Auditorium at which the co-partners received their allotments for the year and the new co-partners were individually welcomed by the Chairman, who personally handed to them their certificates. At these meetings, over which he invariably presided, Lever gave a series of vigorous speeches, coloured by many apt and amusing anecdotes and brimful of the philosophy of human efficiency, enlightened self-interest and the maxims of Co-partnership. Speaking as one who has had the opportunity of studying at close quarters the progressive effects of my father's policy I can, without hesitation, describe it as successful, for it has instilled into the working lives of the employees a spirit of comradeship which has evidenced itself on many occasions and in many directions. The question naturally arises whether Co-partnership, as understood at Port Sunlight, can be applied universally and be regarded as a national cure for many of the ills which at present beset our industrial life. In the case of Lever Brothers its introduction was, of course, made easier by reason of the fact that all the Ordinary shares of the Company were in one person's hands, and the force of this became startlingly evident after my father's death, when it was discovered that, as half the Ordinary shares of the Company were, under the terms of his will, to be held by trustees for the benefit of a number of persons, some of them yet unborn, and of various public institutions and charitable objects not specifically named, it would in future be legally impossible, without obtaining the direction of the Court, to issue further certificates. In companies where the Ordinary capital is scattered over a large number of shareholders, it is doubtful whether such a Co-partnership scheme could be introduced, as it would of necessity have the effect of depreciating the market value of the Ordinary shares and lessening their rate of dividend.

Although my father strongly resented any suggestion that the Co-partnership dividends were in any sense an annual gift to the

co-partners out of his own pocket, there can be no escape from the fact that, had there been no such scheme and had the profits of the business remained the same, he would have been legally entitled, as Ordinary shareholder, to the share of profits which the co-partners received.

During my father's lifetime, the Ordinary dividends were always on a scale which permitted of a dividend on the Co-partnership certificates, and when results are continuously favourable, people are apt to take them for granted. There was a danger, therefore, that the co-partners, receiving their dividends regularly year by year, might come to look upon them as something in the nature of an annual "Christmas-box" rather than the product of the united efforts of all engaged in the business, from the Board of Directors downwards. As a member of the staff wittily put it in the course of a speech at one of the annual Co-partnership meetings, "We cast our bread upon the waters and we find that it comes back to us buttered on both sides!" The years 1925 and 1926, when neither Co-partnership dividends nor Ordinary dividends were paid, have removed any doubts on this particular point, however, for while the co-partners were naturally disappointed, they accepted the position in an admirable spirit, and Co-partnership certainly stood this acid test in a way which would have been most gratifying to my father had he lived to see it.

It is always difficult in discussing the question of Capital and Labour to persuade Labour to look beyond the immediate present and to measure the present in any other terms than £ s. d. A young workman, on receiving his first Co-partnership certificate of a nominal value of, say, ten pounds, and a dividend on it of, say, 10 per cent., receives in cash one pound, which appears a comparatively small sum, and when the dividend is paid in 8 per cent. shares in lieu of cash, the only money which he actually receives, unless he disposes of the shares, is under two shillings. It is only as his responsibilities increase and his annual Co-partnership allotments accumulate, that he appreciates the scheme in its full significance. A striking example of this came a few years ago when two unions connected with the carpentry and joinery trades, under the erroneous impression that profit-sharing and co-partnership schemes were against the best interests of Trade Unionism, ruled that their members were not in future to

take part in them. To some of the older members of the unions in Lever Brothers' employ, this meant the sacrifice of an annual income of anything from fifty to a hundred pounds. They naturally resented the new rules and took the case to Court, and eventually to the House of Lords, where it was decided that their unions were not entitled to expel them for participating in Lever Brothers' scheme.

Whether it would be possible to devise any hard and fast scheme of Co-partnership which could be made the subject of legislation and introduced universally into industry, is a question open to some doubt, but in any event partnership arrangements voluntarily entered into between employers and employed must have far more beneficial results than any scheme imposed by the State. Co-partnership implies a certain sacrifice on the part of Capital, and only the capitalist who himself works in a business in which it exists can see the good results at close quarters. The outside investor is apt to look upon it as a limitation upon his security. In considering Co-partnership in relation to Leverhulme's life, however, the point to remember is that he seized the unique opportunity which was his, as the sole Ordinary shareholder in Lever Brothers, and made this bold contribution towards the solution of a great problem. There are, as he pointed out, three entities in business, Capital, Labour and Management. They are dependent on each other, and supplementary to each other, and upon all three the prosperity of industry rests. This was the cardinal point in Leverhulme's industrial faith, and to him Co-partnership was the material recognition of this economic truth.

CHAPTER XIX

AT HOME AND ABROAD

MY parents made a third journey round the world in the autumn of 1901. They left Marseilles in the s.s. *India* on September 14th and reached Sydney about a month later. At the end of October they sailed across the Pacific to San Francisco in the s.s. *Sierra*, and it was on this voyage that Lever met John T. Arundel, a meeting which, as will be seen in the next chapter, was to have most interesting and important results. Another engaging fellow-passenger, with whom Lever became friendly, was Charles Bertram, the well-known conjurer. Bertram, who was unrivalled at sleight-of-hand and the manipulation of cards, gave several entertainments on board during the voyage, and after his return to England he stayed at Thornton Manor and performed at two or three of the Christmas entertainments and dances which Lever used to give at Thornton for the Port Sunlight staff. From San Francisco Mr. and Mrs. Lever made their way eastward through the Grand Canyon of Arizona to Chicago, and from there to Toronto, Boston and New York. Another journey round the world following almost the same route was planned for the autumn of 1905, but, when the time came, the trend of political events pointed to an early General Election and the proposed tour had to be abandoned.

An opportunity may be taken here of referring to some of the excursions which Lever arranged for the staff and employees of Lever Brothers and their wives and families. In the year 1900, 1,800 were taken to see the Paris Exhibition and driven in a long convoy of vehicles through the city. The following year, 4,000 went to Douglas in the Isle of Man; in 1905 nearly 2,000 were taken to Belgium and were enabled to see the Liège Exhibition and to catch a glimpse of the city of Brussels. It was not found possible to take the whole of the employees on such an elaborate journey, entailing as it did special trains to Folkestone, the chartering of steamers across the Channel and "specials" again on the other side, and so the remainder, numbering 2,500, went to

Blackpool. In the following year over 2,000 visited the Isle of Man, and in 1908 an excursion was organized to the Franco-British Exhibition at Shepherd's Bush. In 1909 over 3,000 went to Blackpool, and in the following year 2,000 were taken to the Brussels Exhibition, and over 2,500 to the Japan-British Exhibition in London.

Although the trade lost by Lever Brothers on account of the newspaper attacks of 1906 was recovered, after the true facts of the case were disclosed in the law courts, the problems and difficulties which the amalgamation had been framed to overcome still remained. Several of the companies which had been in the previous arrangement, however, were anxious to take the first favourable opportunity of throwing in their lot with Lever Brothers, and between the year 1908 and the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, the following British soap-making firms were added to the list of Lever Brothers' Associated Companies: Messrs. Edward Cook & Co., of London; J. Barrington & Sons, Ltd., of Dublin; Ogston & Tennant, Ltd., of Aberdeen and Renfrew; Christopher Thomas & Brothers, Ltd., of Bristol; and Wilkie & Soames, Ltd., of London; while in 1914 Lever Brothers acquired the Ordinary shares of the world-famous firm of A. & F. Pears, Ltd.

Early in 1910 a great sorrow came to Lever in the death of his brother, who died at his home at Thornton Hough on the 29th of March. Since his retirement from business in 1895, James Darcy Lever had suffered almost continuously from ill-health, but the end, when it came, was sudden and unexpected, and a severe blow to his brother.

> "He was of a nature," Lever said in speaking of his loss, "that was gentle, loving and kind, and he was ambitious only to live with those he loved. It has been well said that honesty is the oak round which all other virtues cling, and this was remarkably so in the case of my brother. He was frank, candid and sincere, and he has left the memory of a generous life filled by unselfish acts."

As a tribute to his memory, Lever placed in one of the transept windows of Christ Church, Port Sunlight, a stained-glass window, and at its unveiling he spoke with sincere feeling of his business comrade of earlier years.

It was three days after my uncle's death that I first joined my

father at Port Sunlight and entered the business of Lever Brothers, having just returned from a journey round the world. It was not my first acquaintance with the art of soap-making, however, for my father had, during my last few holidays from Eton and my vacations from Cambridge, arranged for me to spend two or three mornings a week in the works and laboratories at Port Sunlight, a restriction upon holiday freedom which I no doubt looked upon, at the time, as an undue exercise of parental prerogative, although I saw the wisdom of it afterwards.

On June 20th, 1911, my father was created a Baronet of the United Kingdom, his name appearing in the list of Coronation Honours. The news had reached Port Sunlight in the early morning, and when he arrived there at his usual hour he found the whole office staff gathered in the roadway, while at the entrance, beneath a hastily erected canopy of bunting, were his co-directors and other officials of the Company. When the cheering and friendly mobbing had subsided, he made a brief but feeling speech of thanks. Two days later, at a concert given by the Philharmonic Society—the closing event of Port Sunlight's Coronation festivities—the congratulations of the community were again tendered to him.

"I want," he said, when speaking on this occasion, "to take this opportunity of saying how much Lady Lever and I value the very great kindness you have shown to us, and your generous reception of the honour conferred upon us. Honours, in themselves, would be very empty indeed if they were not so received and welcomed by those amongst whom we live, and if they did not win the endorsement and approval of our friends and neighbours and those with whom we are associated. . . . When I received the intimation that His Majesty the King had graciously purposed to confer this honour upon me, I was told that the Coronation Honours were given entirely apart from politics, that no political considerations entered into them, and that the King had expressed a wish that my name should be on the list. Believe me, I have not sought the honour in any way, nor have I the excuse which, I believe, is not unusual on these occasions, that the recipient did not wish it, but the wife did. It is going to throw an increased burden of responsibility upon us, and it is only by your help, by your kind and generous forbearance on all occasions, and by your sympathy and support, that we will be able to fulfil our duties in this new sphere."

By 1910 the time had arrived for the building of works in South Africa, and a site was acquired at Congella, near Durban.

The factory was opened in May of the following year. These works—which were on a larger scale than any hitherto erected by Lever Brothers in an overseas country—created almost a record in factory construction, for it was only in April of the previous year that the first steel-work had been shipped from England. On January 6th, 1912, Sir William and Lady Lever sailed for South Africa in the *Armadale Castle* and returned by the same steamer, arriving home on February 23rd. On February 7th, while in Cape Town, Lady Lever "cut the first sod" for a second South African works, at Salt River, near Cape Town. This was the third occasion on which she had performed a similar duty, but the Cape Town ceremony was far simpler and more unconventional than its predecessors. Lever happened to be visiting the site one day when the thought occurred to him that his wife might appropriately cut the first sod, as she had done at Port Sunlight and Sydney. There was no time to arrange any formalities, however, so he pulled out his pocket knife and asked her there and then to cut a small piece of turf. In selecting a locality in which to establish a works Lever seemed to have an almost uncanny power of divination. One can hardly imagine a more ideal industrial site than that of Port Sunlight as it exists to-day, although at the time Lever went there it seemed remote and inhospitable, and the works at Congella and Salt River are further cases in point. Originally they were in isolated spots some distance from the principal manufacturing quarters of Durban and Cape Town; but to-day they are in the centre of important and rapidly developing industrial districts.

While Lever was in Durban a picnic was given to the staff and employees, at which an incident occurred which he was always fond of relating as a story against himself. An old Kaffir chief, accompanied by his five wives, had come down to see the picnic and sports. He could speak a little English and asked if he could see "The Great White Chief" in whose honour the entertainment was being held. Lever, who at the moment was chatting inconspicuously with several members of the staff, was pointed out to him by Frederick Goodall, the managing director of the South African business. "What! Him!" ejaculated the chief. "No doubt he went away from the fête," said the object of his surprise in telling the story afterwards, "thinking the white races did not know how to run the 'chief' business anyhow."

Lever Brothers' interests in South Africa had been extended by the acquisition in 1911 of the Transvaal Soap Company of Johannesburg, and in 1915 the Company's position was further consolidated by the purchase of an interest in the New Transvaal Chemical Company of Delmore, near Johannesburg, and also of the business of the South African Oils and Fat Industries at Jacobs, near Durban.

CHAPTER XX

THE SOUTH SEAS

MY father had first given consideration to the question of producing his own raw materials in the Tropics in 1896, and he had in that year been offered a large tract of land in New Guinea. For various reasons, however, he declined this offer, and it was not until 1901, during his voyage from Sydney to Vancouver, that, in turning over in his mind the matters which had engaged his attention in Australia, he decided that the time had definitely arrived for this important step to be taken, and that a start might profitably be made by having his own copra plantations in the South Seas to supply the mills at Sydney. Travelling to Vancouver on the same steamer with Lever was John T. Arundel, one of the earliest British commercial pioneers in the Pacific. Arundel knew the South Seas as few men knew them, and during the previous twenty-five years he had spent a great deal of time searching for phosphate deposits, and a company, under the name of John T. Arundel & Co., had been formed to work various relatively unimportant ones which he had discovered, as well as to carry on a general trading business. This concern had, however, some years before Arundel's meeting with Lever, been superseded by a company called "The Pacific Islands Company, Ltd." The further history of this undertaking—or rather of the important enterprise which sprang from it—reads almost like a fairy-tale, and is one of the romances of commerce. During a cruise on one of the Company's trading ships, the supercargo had picked up a curious-looking block of material at Nauru, or Pleasant Island, one of the islands in the Marshall group. This lump of rock-like substance had been taken to Sydney and left at the office of the Company's manager, who had had it examined. It had been decided, however, that the material was a piece of petrified wood, and no further attention had been paid to it. For a long time it was used as a door-stop, until one day some years later it caught the eye of Mr. A. F. Ellis, an

expert mineralogist, who happened to be calling upon the manager. Ellis's curiosity was aroused, and with the manager's permission he took a piece of the substance away with him and had it carefully analysed, with the result that this neglected door-stop was found, in reality, to be a piece of very high-grade tribasic phosphate of lime. In consequence of this discovery a small expedition was sent under Ellis early in 1900 to Nauru, where huge deposits of the phosphate were found to exist. As it was known that Ocean Island, some 160 miles from Nauru, was of much the same geological formation, Ellis examined this island also and found it to be rich in phosphate of an even higher quality than the deposit in Nauru. It was shortly after this that Arundel, on his way home to make arrangements for the working of the newly discovered deposits, met Lever.

The Pacific Islands Company had interests in various islands where copra was being produced, and this fact formed the introductory topic of conversation. Lever soon became greatly interested, however, not only in the Company's copra developments, but also in the optimistic accounts which Arundel gave him of the phosphate discoveries. Further conversations during the voyage led to Lever purchasing the interests of the Pacific Islands Company in the South Pacific, and to his agreeing, at the same time, to provide some of the capital of the new company to be formed for working the phosphate deposits in Ocean Island and Nauru. Before this company could operate, however, certain difficulties had to be overcome, for whilst Ocean Island was under the British flag, Nauru was in the German sphere of influence, and the mining rights in the Marshall Islands were held by a German company, which had long been established as a trading firm in the Pacific. It was, therefore, necessary for the Pacific Islands Company to come to a working arrangement with this company, with the consent of the German Government. This was eventually accomplished and a concession was obtained to work the Nauru phosphate deposits. In 1902 the Pacific Islands Company was wound up and its various interests disposed of, except those in Ocean Island and Nauru. These were taken over by a new company, which was launched under the title of "The Pacific Phosphate Company, Ltd.," with a capital of £250,000. The Nauru concession then became a matter of international controversy, but in 1905 a new concession, lasting

until the year 2000, was granted by the German Government, and it was notable as being probably the only mining concession obtained by a British company in German territory. Of the three British subjects who negotiated it, the only survivor is Mr. Alwin Dickinson, who was for many years managing director of the Pacific Phosphate Company, and is still connected with the enterprise. From 1906 onwards rapid progress was made, the capital of the Company being doubled in 1909, and subsequently increased to £787,500. But for the Great War it would undoubtedly have grown to even larger dimensions.

Arundel and Dickinson used much persuasion to induce Lever to become a director of the company. At first he was reluctant to do so, as he had virtually made it a rule not to join the Board of any concern unconnected with Lever Brothers; but eventually he agreed, and, under the chairmanship of the late Lord Balfour of Burleigh, served as a director for some years.

At the beginning of the War one of the first measures taken by the Allies in the Pacific was to put the German wireless station at Nauru out of commission. This was done by an Australian warship, without opposition, in September 1914, and in the following November the island was formally occupied by Australian troops. The Pacific Phosphate Company's operations, which had been temporarily in abeyance, were then resumed under British administration, but their scale was necessarily limited by war conditions. At Versailles the future of Nauru became a subject of acute discussion, but a mandate for the administration of the island was, in the end, granted to the British Empire, and the British, Australian and New Zealand Governments entered into an agreement to acquire the phosphate deposits jointly. In agreeing to part with its rights the Company considered that it would be desirable to dispose at the same time of its interests in Ocean Island, and after negotiations lasting over a year, in which the Governments concerned were represented by the late Lord Milner and the Company by Alwyn Dickinson, terms were agreed upon. The actual price paid by the three Governments to the shareholders of the Pacific Phosphate Company was £3,500,000, and the results since achieved show that this figure, large as it appears to be, was not an unreasonable one. Such, in brief outline, has been the history of this remark-

ably successful venture, in the affairs of which Lever played no inconsiderable part.

The copra properties which Lever acquired in the Pacific through his purchase of Arundel's interest in the Pacific Islands Company were soon found to be too scattered for effective working; and in 1902 Mr. H. R. Greenhalgh, now one of the vice-chairmen of Lever Brothers, and Mr. George Fulton, who is to-day the chairman of Levers' Pacific Plantations, Ltd., were sent to the South Sea Islands to make a report on the prospects of more intensive development in those regions. No steps were immediately taken, but in 1905 Mr. Joseph Meek, who had succeeded Mr. J. P. Gray as chairman of Lever Brothers' Australian Company, after prospecting through the Pacific and the Straits Settlements, visited England and laid the results of his survey before Lever, who, after careful consideration, came to the conclusion that the Solomon Islands were the field in which the best results could be obtained. The Colonial Office was approached, and as a result Lever Brothers eventually acquired about 300,000 acres in the British Solomons, and Lever then began coco-nut planting on a considerable scale, forming for the purpose an associated company called "Levers' Pacific Plantations, Ltd."

The great problem in the Solomon Islands always has been, and still remains, the provision of an adequate labour supply. The natives, belonging almost entirely to the Melanesian race, were by nature warriors and head-hunters, and although, with the opening up of the Islands by white men, they have grown more civilized, they have at the same time become less virile, with the result that the population has tended steadily to decrease at a rate which cannot be entirely accounted for by the introduction of diseases which were hitherto unknown. In a land where a bountiful soil and climate provide for all his wants the native fails to see the logic of work as a substitute for head-hunting and fighting. The comforts and trappings of civilization interest him much less than they do the African native, and his trading instinct is not as strongly developed. The result is that he soon becomes lazy, and the work on a plantation can only be energetically pursued by the constant recruitment of natives from less civilized islands. A newly planted coco-nut palm takes anything from six to ten years to come into bearing, and before a plantation

can be started the thick natural bush has to be cleared. After the clearings have been made and the trees planted, the undergrowth has to be kept down and an incessant warfare waged against insect pests. It will be seen therefore that to be successful a coco-nut planter must have reserves of capital, a good deal of patience, and, above all, an adequate supply of labour, without which the capital and the patience are of little avail. In 1911 Joseph Meek, at Lever's request, went to India with offers of free land as an incentive to Indian labourers to go to the Islands, but unfortunately the Government would not give their consent to the introduction of Indian labour into the Pacific.

Although steady progress continued to be made with the plantations, the enterprise was sadly handicapped by the shortage of native labour, and the repeated refusals of the Government to see the wisdom of Lever's arguments with regard to the importation of labour undoubtedly damped his ardour as far as the Solomons were concerned. While I do not say that he would never have taken such an active interest in the Belgian Congo had he been able to have his own way in the Solomons, or in other British possessions, there is no doubt that the Islands never won from him such whole-hearted enthusiasm as they would have done had more official sympathy been shown to his keen desire to develop this part of the Empire.

Lever paid his first and only visit to the Solomons during the course of a journey round the world in 1913–14. The Plantation Company's own steamer, the *Kulambangra*, which was specially built for carrying copra from the Islands to Sydney, met him at Rabaul in German New Guinea, and in her he sailed through the islands, inspecting in turn all the plantations and properties of the Company.

Lever's impressions of the Solomons are preserved for us in two records—the one a letter to his old friend, Sydney Gross, and the other a personal diary kept during this particular part of his journey.

"Imagine you can stand on the deck of this steamer," he wrote to Sydney Gross. "The captain tells you that you are approaching 'So-and-so' Island. Gradually it rises from the azure blue of the Pacific. Larger and larger it grows, until you can see every tree and palm clearly, and you drop anchor in a land-locked bay.

"The launch is lowered to take you ashore. On rising ground

you see the manager's bungalow, with a well-kept garden in front and line upon line of coco-nut palms in serried masses for hundreds of thousands of acres in the background. You land at a small jetty made of coral, of beautiful and fantastic form. You walk up to the red-roofed, white-sided bungalow, and note the generous and ample width of the verandah all round. From this vantage you get a panorama of bay and palm-clad shores, with the good ship that brought you lying at anchor. You also get a bird's-eye view of the garden, and here you see gorgeous-hued tropical foliage, plants and brilliant flowers such as are grown at home only in hot-houses and with difficulty and anxious care, but which here you see growing with little care and less attention, vigorous and strong—huge plants as large as laurel bushes. In the kitchen garden you see pineapples, oranges, limes, lemons, bananas, grape-fruit, mangoes and all manner of tropical fruit. At the back you see a well-stocked poultry farm with the promise of an ample supply of eggs and chickens and ducks. You see pigs and dogs, horses and cattle, and, of the horses, a bunch are waiting saddled and bridled to take yourself and party over the plantations. You start off feeling grateful for these helpful horses, which you will have only on a very few plantations, and it takes a good two hours of stiffish walking or riding to see a plantation. Well, grateful for the horses when you have them, off you start, the estate manager explaining the year when each paddock was planted—some very forward, precociously forward, like human children, others backward, some very backward. Here a grove heavy with 140 nuts per tree, there patches of trees suffering from bud-rot, or root-disease, or leaf-disease, or ravages of beetles. Then you come on the main herd of 500 head of cattle—as fine specimens of Shorthorns, Herefords or Red Polls as ever delighted the heart of a farmer. As you return you pass a bullock team at work, and stop to examine the steam-plough which did such good work in pioneer days before it was known that bullocks would thrive and prosper, but which is little used now, for it costs double in the Solomons per acre to plough by latest up-to-date steam power compared with the old-fashioned bullocks; and so you return to the bungalow, calling on the way at the dispensary where simple medicines are given out to the natives, and to have a look in the sheds provided for native quarters. Leaving the horses where you mounted them, you return to the ship. After lunch on board you are ready for the inspection of more plantations, and so on. But the air in the Solomons is bracing, and you do not feel fatigued, and after a bath and a good dinner enjoy the circle on the upper deck, where, with the captain as central figure, anecdotes of sea and land, storm and stress, canoes and head-hunters, beach-combers and blackbird runners, test your credulity almost to breaking-point."

From his diary, written in a more serious vein, the following extracts, sorted out from the mass of business records which form its substance, are of general interest.

"*December 14th, Sunday. On board the Kulambangra.*—A beautiful calm day. At 10.30 a.m. I read in the saloon some prayers from Robert Louis Stevenson and extracts from Dickens. No service is given on the boat on Sundays."

"*December 15th. Faisie.*—The Chief of the native village came out to meet us and we afterwards went into his hut. There I noted a wardrobe, three sewing-machines, chairs, table, gramophone, thermos-flask, and other items of civilization amid general dirt and disorder. Mr. Woodford [1] states that the natives are making so much money out of copra at present that they have no idea what to do with their earnings or profits, and either waste them on useless purchases or hoard them in some hole in the ground. He said he had no doubt this old chief could produce hundreds of pounds hidden away somewhere. They won't bank their cash, and really, they don't know what to do with it."

"*December 17th.*—We left Gizo in the *Kulambangra* at 6 a.m. to visit the Island of Kulambangra and the plantations near there. I think very highly of Kulambangra, and as two-thirds by area of our Solomon Islands properties are in the neighbourhood, I had a good search for a central harbour and shipping centre. This I found at the entrance to Webster Cove. I named the bay, or rather channel, in which it is situated, "Ladylever" Harbour, and the land on which the warehouse, etc., will stand 'Ladylever' (one word). The mountain behind rises to a height of over 5,000 feet—a good road can be made to the summit with a grade of 1 in 10 or less, say 1 in 15, if desired. So we can build bungalows, at any height we find best, up to the summit. My own idea is that at 3,000 feet we should meet with a cool climate and most healthy conditions."

References to the health of the natives occur frequently in the diary, and they show the close attention which Lever paid to this side of the work. An efficient medical service to attend to the white and native staffs on the plantations had been maintained by the Company from the start. In the first year the sick-rate percentage was 5·56 per cent. In 1913—the year of Lever's visit—it was 3·18 per cent., and by 1925 it was reduced to 1·6 per cent.

[1] At that time the Chief Commissioner in the British Solomons.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BELGIAN CONGO

MY father's first connection with the trade of West Africa dates back to about the year 1896, when he became privately interested in a venture in Nigeria known as "The Oil Rivers Trading and Exploration Company," or "The Opobo Company," as it was originally called. He parted with his shares in 1904, however, and in the same year the name of the Company was changed to "The Company of African Merchants." Eventually this concern was acquired by the Niger Company, and so it happened that his interest in it became renewed when Lever Brothers bought the Ordinary shares of the Niger Company in 1920. This, however, is incidental. His direct connection with West Africa really dates from the beginning of the present century, when he was becoming convinced that Lever Brothers ought to provide for their own direct supplies of the principal raw materials which they used. In 1903 an expedition was sent to the West Coast under H. R. Greenhalgh, who, it will be recalled, had already visited the South Sea Islands; expeditions had also been sent to the Far East and other parts of the world, so that this early investigation work in West Africa was only part of an extensive programme of inquiry into the question of raw material supplies.

The principal oils coming from tropical Africa are palm oil and palm-kernel oil. Both are derived from the African oil palm, whose plum-like fruit consists of a juicy pericarp and a hard nut, encased in which is the kernel. Palm oil is obtained from the pericarp and palm-kernel oil, as its name implies, from the kernel. The native method of obtaining the oil is crude and laborious, but is still employed almost universally in British West Africa. The pericarp is removed by hand, pulped up and boiled in water, the oil being then separated and brought by the native to the "factory," or depot, of the European trading concern. Palm kernels, after the native has cracked the outer shells between stones, are sold in the same way and then shipped

to Europe to be crushed. Lever realized that the commercial future of West Africa lay in the discovery and development of some means whereby these primitive hand methods of obtaining the oil and kernels could be replaced by machinery capable of dealing with far greater quantities in far less time. Various machines had been constructed for the purpose, but none were satisfactory, and so about the year 1908 he had experiments carried out by his technical experts at Port Sunlight to find a solution of the difficulty. From these experiments a successful depericarping machine was evolved, by means of which the pericarp could be "teased" away from the nut, as well as a machine for cracking the nuts, and in 1910 experiments were satisfactorily carried out on a commercial scale at Adjuah, in the Gold Coast. Careful tests and analyses were then made at various places in Africa to compare the native practice of producing palm oil with the mechanical method, and the results showed that the native obtained from the palm fruit only half the quantity yielded by the mechanical process.

The year 1910 saw two other important developments of Lever Brothers in West Africa—the purchase of W. B. MacIver & Co., a well-established firm of African merchants, and the erection of mills for crushing palm kernels at Opobo in Nigeria and at Apapa, opposite the town of Lagos in the same colony. The purchase of W. B. MacIver & Co.—the first of Lever Brothers' Associated Companies in West Africa—marked their definite entry into the "West African trade," and the mills at Apapa and Opobo were an experiment well worth the making, although they eventually proved that, under normal conditions, kernel crushing in West Africa is not an economic proposition.

The mass production of palm oil and palm kernels is impossible unless the producer is assured of a large and continuous supply of fruit, and to obtain this he must have either freehold or long leasehold rights over a sufficient area of land, or, failing these, long-term agreements with the local chiefs or communities, to ensure the natives bringing their fruit to the mill. Lever turned first to the British Colonies, but found little encouragement, the systems of land tenure in most of them making it impossible. Nothing could be done in Nigeria; little in the Gold Coast. Sierra Leone was the most hopeful field, and in 1912 Lever

Brothers obtained from the native authorities in the Yonni-Banna district, with the sanction of the Sierra Leone Government, an area of some three hundred square miles on a twenty-one years' lease. The venture, however, was not a success, mainly owing to the fact that the yield of pericarp was poor compared with that from oil palms growing nearer the Equator.

Fortunately the help which in British West Africa was proving either impossible or inadequate came unexpectedly from another quarter—from those dark and then barely explored regions of Central Africa watered by the Congo River. They had been the scene of Stanley's explorations, and, lying on the Equator itself, contained vast forests of palm-trees surpassing in quality and profusion those in other parts of West Africa. One of the first to appreciate the commercial possibilities of the regions discovered by Stanley had been King Leopold II of Belgium, a monarch who undoubtedly possessed a business brain of the first order. As an outcome of a conference convened at Brussels by Leopold in September 1876 the Congo basin had been investigated by "The International Association for the Exploration and Civilization of Central Africa" through the intermediary of several national committees; but the Belgian Committee, thanks to the foresight of its chairman, King Leopold, had shown from the first greater activity than the others. Acting on behalf of this Committee, known as "The Congo Association," Stanley and others had entered into a number of treaties with native chiefs, thereby procuring to the Committee governmental powers over the greater part of what is now the Belgian Congo. The Committee received legal recognition at the Berlin Conference of 1889, when the area which it administered was given the name of the "Congo Free State" and its chairman the title of Sovereign of the Congo Free State. Under the autocratic rule of King Leopold the Congo Administration devoted its efforts to freeing the country from Arab slave raiding, stamping out intertribal warfare, and preparing the ground for a complete administrative and judicial system, as well as for a network of railway communications, the funds for these purposes being largely provided out of the King's private purse. In 1907 Leopold offered to hand over the Congo to Belgium as soon as it would please his people to accept the gift, and on October 19th, 1908, after long negotiations with the Belgian Government and

Parliament, it definitely became a Belgian colony, and the Belgian nation assumed responsibility for its future development and the welfare of its native races. In agreement with King Leopold the new Congo Government initiated a more liberal economic policy, and in 1909, with the object of making its fresh departure known to British capitalists and inviting their co-operation in the Congo, sent Dr. Max Horn to England. Dr. Horn addressed the principal Chambers of Commerce in the United Kingdom, and in the course of his duties called upon the late Sir Alfred Jones, the chairman of Elder, Dempster & Co., and at that time the outstanding figure in the trade of British West Africa. Sir Alfred had also been Consul-General in Great Britain for the Congo Free State. At his suggestion Dr. Horn saw Lever and drew his attention to the vast and almost unexploited palm forest of the Upper Congo. Lever was not at first attracted by his proposals, the suggested enterprise being so far from the sea and transport difficulties so acute; he agreed, however, that M. Henri de Keyser, an ex-commissaire in the old Congo Administration, and a Mr. Burgess should be sent to Africa to make a careful examination.

On December 17th of the same year King Leopold died and was succeeded by his nephew, the present King Albert, who had just completed, as heir to the throne, a tour of the Belgian Congo, in the course of which he had been joined by the Colonial Minister, M. Jules Renkin, who had been Minister of Justice under Leopold, and in that capacity negotiated the convention under which the Congo had been annexed to Belgium. A few months later, the favourable report of Burgess and de Keyser having been fully confirmed by a second investigation carried out by Lichfield H. Moseley, of whom mention will be made later, Lever intimated to Dr. Horn his readiness to set up oil-mills in the Belgian Colony, provided the Government could see their way to afford adequate security for the capital to be invested. M. Renkin, in company with Dr. Horn, then saw Lever, and at this interview an understanding was arrived at that Lever Brothers should undertake development work in the Congo under the terms of a convention to be agreed upon between the Company and the Belgian Government. The terms of this convention were carefully discussed between Dr. Horn, on behalf of the Congo Government, and representatives of Lever

Brothers, and finally it was agreed between Lever and M. Renkin that Lever Brothers should form a Belgian Joint Stock Company to take the name of "La Société Anonyme des Huileries du Congo Belge," the capital of which was to be not less than Frs. 25,000,000. This company was to erect at five points in the colony mills for the production of palm oil and palm kernels, and to have the right over a period of ten years to select, within a radius of sixty kilometres from each of these points, palm areas amounting in total, providing certain conditions were fulfilled, to 750,000 hectares, or approximately 1,860,000 acres. The rent of the land chosen was to be twenty-five centimes per hectare, but it was to pass under the ownership of the Company in the year 1945, subject to a continuance of the same rental, and provided that the Company was by then exporting not less than an average of a thousand kilogrammes of oil, or its equivalent in oleaginous products, for each twenty-five hectares of land which it held. The Company was also to undertake to pay its native workers a minimum wage, and in each area to provide at its own expense one doctor, and at least one hospital and one school. It was further stipulated that not less than half the white staff were to be of Belgian nationality, and that not less than one-half of the trade goods and one-third of the machinery and plant sent to the Congo were to be of Belgian manufacture. The Company was to have the power within its concessions to build roads, canals, railways, as well as quays, piers and wharves, along the waterways, and to install telegraphic communication; but all these facilities were to be placed, when necessary, at the disposal of the Government, and the Company's boats were to supplement the Government's postal services when required.

That such extensive concessions to a limited company met with some measure of criticism was perhaps only natural, but in view of the immense benefit which was likely to accrue to the colony through this far-reaching agreement the convention, after a thorough and detailed discussion, was passed by the Belgian Colonial Council and Parliament without serious opposition. The approval given to the scheme by the Belgian Socialist leader, M. Vandervelde, did much to disarm criticism. He would, he said, have opposed the suggested concessions had they been offered to any other firm, but he was aware of the

conditions which existed at Port Sunlight, and on that account the proposals had his support. After being ratified by Parliament the convention was signed on April 14th, 1911.

Belgium was fortunate in her Colonial Minister, for there is no doubt that it was due to M. Renkin's handling of the negotiations that the new enterprise in the Congo was on such an impressive scale, and it is equally certain that, had the Belgian Government been dealing with a man with less vision than Lever, they would never have secured for their colony the great benefits which were to accrue from the new undertaking itself and from the incentive which it was to give to others. Lever became president of the new company—Les Huileries du Congo Belge—and John L. Tillotson, who was closely associated with its early developments, vice-president. The Government had the right to appoint a representative on the Board, and chose for this office of "Commissaire du Gouvernement" Dr. Horn, whose able *liaison* work throughout the negotiations had been an important factor in their successful issue, while, at the suggestion of M. Renkin, Lever readily agreed that the Board should comprise a number of other Belgian members. The actual management, however, was vested in Lever Brothers, who were to furnish to the Board every year a full account of the operations and progress of the Company.

Lever threw himself with almost boyish enthusiasm into the new enterprise and infected his colleagues with his own intrepid optimism. It must be admitted that when the terms and scope of the convention were made public the West African business world as a whole was sceptical, and looked upon the venture more as a philanthropic undertaking than as a sound commercial proposition; but, undaunted by these doubting Thomases, amongst whom were some of the most experienced men in the African trade, Lever remained convinced that the undertaking would in the end be successful.

At each step he directed the immense programme of development which the convention entailed, and was in almost daily conference with those of his lieutenants to whom the detailed work was entrusted. A special "Congo Committee" was formed, consisting of those directors of Lever Brothers who were specially concerned in the new undertaking, together with a number of technical advisers. It is a sound maxim that assemblies can

legislate but not administer, and that committees can advise but not manage. For the management of Les Huileries du Congo Belge, therefore, a special department was created and placed in the hands of H. R. Greenhalgh, with whom was associated L. H. Moseley, who later became a director of Lever Brothers, and who had had a lifelong experience of West Africa, having as a youth seen active service in Nigeria as an official of the Niger Company in the days when it was a chartered company. In every detail, however, Lever exercised the closest personal control and vigilance. Not a palm area was selected nor a site chosen, except on his authority; not a building was erected unless the plans had been passed by him, and very often these plans were largely his own; not a piece of plant or machinery nor a craft on the river, from the largest stern-wheeler to the smallest launch or barge, was ordered until he had carefully examined and passed the specifications. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that the organization which came into being —from the shipping base at the port of Matadi and the administrative headquarters at Kinshasa to the farthest area of Elizabetha, over a thousand miles from the Congo mouth—was his personal creation.

The first area to be developed was Lusanga, with its centre at Leverville, which was founded on October 24th, 1911, the site having been selected and cleared a few months earlier. Speaking at the annual meeting of Lever Brothers five months later, Lever gave the following description of Leverville in its earliest days :—

> "We have cleared fifty acres and roads have been laid out. We are building our first mill and houses both for the natives and our European staff. . . . It is an ideal spot for a town. On one side there is a small hill on which the Europeans can live in health, and we have deep water and a very fine navigable river right in front, and an ideal spot also for the native population. It is embedded in extensive areas of palm-trees stretching for miles upon miles."

The first machinery was dispatched on August 12th, 1911, and the first consignment of palm oil reached Antwerp on March 20th, 1912. Soap made from this oil by the Savonneries Lever Frères in Brussels was ready by March 27th—three months after the landing of the first material at Leverville. In April Sir William Lever—as he had then become—was received by

King Albert, when a casket made from Congo ivory, enclosing the first tablet of this soap, was tendered to and accepted by His Majesty, and at the same time a working model of the Company's first stern-wheeler, the *Duc de Brabant*, was presented to his elder son, Prince Leopold.

When he embarked on the enterprise Lever knew that it would be at the very least five years before even the smallest return could be expected from the capital invested, and that success could only come from patient perseverance and sustained enthusiasm. They were strenuous days, but to Lever intensely interesting and enjoyable ones, made easier by the ready help given by the Belgian Government, especially by M. Renkin, who fortunately shared most of his views with regard to the development of tropical countries. The work in the Congo itself was also helped greatly by the Government officials of the colony, notably by two of the earlier Governors-General—M. Henry and M. Maurice Lippens.

In 1910, when the employees at Port Sunlight were taken on an excursion to the Brussels Exhibition, a deputation waited upon King Albert and presented to him an album containing views of the village. The King informed Lever on this occasion that, while travelling incognito in England before he came to the throne, he had visited Port Sunlight. He pointed to a photograph in the album showing the church, and said he remembered that it was then being built, which makes it clear that this visit—of which the Company was unaware at the time—must have taken place about 1903. My father always attributed the granting to Lever Brothers of the concessions in the Congo in no small measure to the personal influence of King Albert, who throughout his reign has worked untiringly, not only for the material prosperity of his colony, but also for the betterment, education and well-being of the natives.

My father made two journeys through the Belgian Congo —the first, accompanied by my mother, in the winter of 1912–13; the second at the end of 1924, only a few months before his death—and, had the War not intervened, there is no doubt that he would have paid several intermediate visits. My parents sailed from Antwerp in the s.s. *Leopoldville* [1] on November 16th, 1912. Included in the party which accompanied them

[1] Now the *Abinsi*, belonging to Messrs. Elder, Dempster.

THE BUNGALOW, RIVINGTON

LEWS CASTLE, STORNOWAY

were Mr. L. H. Moseley; Dr. (now Sir William) Prout, the eminent specialist in tropical medicine; Mr. Fred Wernham, an expert in tropical plantation work, who had been closely identified with Lever Brothers' developments in the Solomons; the late Mr. Oliver Winder, in charge of the engineering department of the Huileries, and Dr. Horn. In the course of their journey, which took four months, the expedition covered altogether some 15,000 miles, of which about 7,000 were on the Congo River and its tributaries. In the Company's stern-wheeler *Lusanga* they visited, in the following order, each of the five centres covered by the convention :—

The Lusanga area, with its centre at Leverville (named after its founder) which stands at the point where the Kwenge River joins the Kwilu (a tributary of the Kasai).

The Basongo area, with its centre at Brabanta (named after the Duc de Brabant, the Belgian Crown Prince), on the Kasai River, a tributary of the Congo.

The Ingende area, with its centre at Flandria (named after the Comte de Flandre, King Albert's younger son), on the River Ruki, a tributary of the Congo.

The Bumba area, with its centre at Alberta (named after King Albert), on the main Congo River.

The Basoko area, with its centre at Elizabetha (named after the Queen of the Belgians), also on the main Congo River.

On its outward voyage the *Leopoldville* called at Dakar, in the French Senegal, and at Conakry, in French Guinea. At both places Lever was impressed with the general design and lay-out of the town, the wide thoroughfares, the spacious boulevards, and the sense of civic pride. "We are not to-day a race of town-planners if we are a race of Empire-builders," he wrote in his diary after leaving Conakry. No one can sail down the West Coast of Africa without noticing the difference between the seaport towns built by the French in their colonies and the corresponding towns in British territory. The French ports are more elaborate and look as if they had been built to be lived in indefinitely—to be homes, in fact—while the British ports are plainer and have the air of being residences for a temporary population rather than homes for a permanent one. There is a characteristic entry in the diary bearing on this, written before reaching Boma, at the mouth of the Congo.

"British West Africa has been created by the enterprise of private Britishers unaided by Government help or even encouragement. French and German West Africa are entirely Government creations—the French and Germans no doubt envy the enterprise of British private citizens, and we envy, in our turn, the help given by French and German Governments. Where would the French West Coast Colonies be to-day if France had had a Sir Alfred Jones, and where would we have been with our British Colonies without Sir Alfred Jones? You cannot make a colony to a Government pattern like a ready-made suit of clothes, with any hope of making a correct fit—still, there is no reason why the suit should be made without measure and design and plan."

The expedition disembarked at Matadi, below the Congo rapids—the terminus for ocean-going steamers—and travelled from there to Kinshasa by the Congo Railway—that unfortunate "bottle-neck" through which all the trade of the rich hinterland of the colony must pass on its way to the sea, the rapids being a barrier to direct navigation.

During his journey Lever kept a diary of each day's doings, and this manuscript of nearly three hundred closely written foolscap pages forms a wonderfully interesting record of all he saw and did, and of the impression made upon him by the Congo, with its vast possibilities for future development, its luxuriant scenery, its native races and customs, and its scattered white population of Government officials, traders and missionaries. A great part of the diary is naturally taken up with business matters—decisions which were made, proposals for the future, opinions of men and methods, plans for new mills, native villages and houses for the European staff, as well as estimates, in terms of tropical produce, of the various areas visited; but in addition there is much that is of popular and general interest. In a book of this length I am limited to a brief sketch of this journey through the Congo, and I will let my father tell his own story by giving a few extracts from his diary.

"*December 7th* (*Matadi to Thysville*).—We were all ready for the special train to leave Matadi 6.30 a.m. We passed through most beautiful scenery, climbing up by the side of the Congo for the first 10 or 15 miles. We arrived at Thysville about 5.30 p.m., and Monsieur Beissel [1] placed his own house at the disposal of my wife and myself with a room for Dulston.[2] Nothing could be kinder than the care and courtesy we have

[1] M. Franz Beissel is now one of the two "Administrateurs Délégués en Afrique" of Les Huileries du Congo Belge.

[2] Lady Lever's maid.

constantly received from M. Beissel, and this has been a crowning piece of thought for our comfort. On the train he had arranged a dining saloon out of an ordinary carriage, the seats being taken away and a centre table and chairs arranged in their place, so that we had a comfortable lunch in great style. He said this was the first dining-car ever arranged on the Congo Railway."

"*December 9th* (*Thysville to Kisantu*).—Kisantu is a Jesuit Mission Station where agriculture and handicrafts are taught to the natives. We saw an excellent range of farm buildings built of bricks made by natives taught by the Brothers. They have a fine herd of cattle and some fine ponies, mules and donkeys. Their church is a fine building, also their monastery. They grow rice, manioc, Indian corn, etc. Altogether it is a very thriving Mission Station. The Jesuits seem to manage the natives extremely well, but the Father Superior told me that they (the natives) invariably leave them at twenty years of age in the case of men and sixteen to eighteen in the case of women. They cannot keep them afterwards, but from ten years of age to the above ages they prove themselves very apt scholars, docile and willing and most excellent farm-hands.

"A great deal of the simpler articles of furniture, such as chairs, tables, cupboards, etc., have been made entirely by the natives. A small printing press is always being run, and Bibles printed thereon in the native tongue. . . . We have fairly astonished the local authorities by the great work we have done at Kinshasa in a little over twelve months. The *Lusanga* is a magnificent boat, described as the finest on the Congo River. Edkins [1] has rigged up a special cabin for us at the front of the saloon deck just under the captain's cabin. This saves my wife going up and down steps, and gives us also a larger and better arranged room. The saloon is large and airy, fitted with mosquito-wire gauze to windows and doors. I had a screen of the same wire gauze fitted all round the front of our cabin, so that we have now a verandah 8 feet deep—cool and insect-proof. Here I am now writing, and it was so cool at 8 a.m. that I put on a light overcoat; now at 9.30 I have taken it off, but it is still comparatively cool and pleasant."

"*December 9th* (*Leopoldville*).—Mr. Edkins and I visited the Jesuit Fathers' Mission. The avenue leading to the Mission is planted with Eleais palms—six years old; we counted a minimum of five and a maximum of ten bunches of fruit on, say, 90 per cent. of the trees—the remaining 10 per cent. not yet bearing and appearing very backward, although all the avenue planted at same time. The Father, speaking in French, said that he could not explain why all were not alike, so I pointed to his 6 feet and my 5 feet 5 inches as equally inexplicable."

"*December 11th* (*on board the Lusanga, bound for Leverville*).—We are now settling down to our life on board. Rise at 5 a.m., shave,

---

[1] Mr. Sydney Edkins is now one of the two "Administrateurs Délégués en Afrique" of Les Huileries du Congo Belge.

cup of tea at 5.15, cold bath at 5.20, breakfast 6.30, lunch 12, afternoon tea 4, dinner 6.30, bed 9."

"*December 14th (on board the Lusanga bound for Leverville).*—Shortly after 6 a.m. I heard a great shouting from the native crew, and the cause was that we were passing close to a dead hippo floating on the water. The black crew were very excited, yelled and shouted, and no doubt were greatly disappointed that the captain would not stop the boat to secure this supply of food for them, to their idea just in the best condition for eating—blown up with the gases of decomposition. I understand that if the captain had stopped and the dead beast had been cut up and brought on board, no white man could have survived the smell. One member of our party on a similar occasion during a previous visit was invited to eat dead hippo steak and declined because of the smell, which was no reason at all to the native, who promptly replied, 'You no eat smell—you eat meat—meat very good.'"

"*December 15th (on board the Lusanga bound for Leverville).*—Our greatest hardship whilst "roughing it" on the Congo appears to be that there is no starch on board. What is life without starch? How can we maintain our self-respect amidst the more than half-naked cannibals we see when our linen fronts, collars and cuffs are limp and starchless! The absence of starch on board reminds me of the story of the Cockney dude who went for a fortnight's shooting on the moors of North Wales, where the birds were plentiful and luxuries scarce. On the second day he exclaimed: "Oh, hang it all, I can rough it with anyone—in fact, I rather like roughing it, but when it comes to drinking champagne out of a claret glass, I draw the line.'"

"*December 22nd (Government Wooding Station, on way to Leverville).*—We have had a good opportunity to examine this village both before and after dark. Dr. Prout says I am 'running unnecessary risk' from mosquitoes, etc., but as I had not been bitten once in the village it was a good opportunity. Mosquitoes are not in every district. Many places are quite free, others are infested. The villagers here are undersized—the women especially so. After dark they all crouched round their fires and ate and chattered like so many monkeys. The huts are low and the entrance is by a small door. I had a pocket electric torch and peered into the gloom, and no respectable dog would have fought for one of these huts as a kennel. We turned on the electric searchlight, and as its rays reached each group around its fire, the natives bolted in terror into their huts. In the case of the Capita, or chief man of the wood station, who was dressed in trousers, waistcoat and a straw hat, he bolted first, and left his wives and children to jam themselves in the door trying to follow him. We tried magnesium wire next, but they enjoyed that; and as to the gramophone, only half a dozen came down to the banks of the river to hear it. But the searchlight had been something that shot across the sky, and whilst a group might not move when it was directed against another group, the natives could not remain still when it was full in their own faces. Edkins asked one of them what he thought of it, and he replied, 'White man palaver moon.' This word 'palaver'

seems to have a great variety of meanings. Anything about the white man—such as a railway, steamboat, etc.—that the native finds beyond his comprehension is very often called 'White man's palaver.'"

"*December 29th* (*on the Kwenge River*).—We left Yambi Yambi at 9.50, and went on in our launch up-river and had a unique experience. We were told we might perhaps see an elephant, but we saw nine elephants. Mr. Moseley had his gun and a few cartridges and wounded one, but it got away and we had no cartridges to follow it up. All nine were in the water, either walking along the shallows or swimming. At one point we had to blow the steam-whistle and reverse the engine to avoid running into one big chap. The Kwenge River is practically free from steamers, and the elephants were quite free from fear. We were told we might travel over the river for years and never see such a sight again. The natives at one place swarmed down to the banks of the river with baskets, etc., full of fruit, and received payment in salt. They were the real bush-native, unspoiled by contact with the white man. It was the most interesting sight we have yet seen. All this river fruit-buying is in its infancy, but I do not think we can rely on it as a permanent supply of fruit. We can only depend on our own gathering and cultivation. The fact is the native has few wants: a little salt and a little cloth are his indispensables; after this, beads, brass rods and other luxuries. Chief Womba, at Leverville, can be taken as an example. Twelve months ago he and his people were poor and few in number, and were keen to bring fruit. After twelve months or less of selling fruit he is rich and lazy, has ten wives, and his village is about four times the size it was; but he gathers little or no fruit. The palm-tree is in these parts the banking account of the native, and he no more thinks of going to his bank for money when his wants and ambitions are supplied than a civilized man would. His bank is always open when he wants to draw on it."

"1913. *January 1st* (*return from Leverville*).—We take with us a native little girl of five years of age who had been sold as a slave by a neighbouring village. The child says her parents sold her. We propose to leave the child in the care of the Jesuit Fathers at Womballi to-morrow. The last few days have been so crowded with work and excitement that Leverville does not even now take its proper position in one's thoughts. . . . There never has been a moment when I have had doubts as to the success of our Congo enterprise, and to-day my confidence is stronger than ever. We have enormous areas of palm-trees at Leverville, probably 400,000 hectares, and the trees are all healthy and strong, and fruiting as well as they can be expected to do in a wild tangle of bush with palms overcrowding each other. The grandest sight I have seen in any part of the world is the palm valleys and hill-sides of the Leverville area. I said above that the palm areas in the Leverville concession were probably 400,000 hectares. I said this because it gives an idea of their enormous extent. . . . These are the ideas I have formed. Time alone can prove me right or wrong. I have no more reason or justification to claim accuracy for my views than another person has.

Patience and hard work will prove all things. Truth does not always live in a well—it is more often discovered in hard work and hard thinking."

"*January 5th (return from Leverville on s.s. Lusanga)*.—We got away this morning at 5.15 before it was properly light and made good progress. At 9.30 we stopped to wood at Bolobo, where is both a Government post and also the headquarters for the Upper Congo of the Baptist Missionary Society. Bolobo Mission is doing a grand work, especially in medical service. They have a fine hospital on modern lines, and it appears that it was built entirely from the money raised in Liverpool by the Baptist Missionary Exhibition which I opened. We saw the baptism of about half a dozen native converts. They were baptized in the Congo River, the missionary going in with them. It was a very solemn and impressive service."

"*January 9th (on board s.s. Lusanga)*.—We next passed a Trappist Mission, an American Baptist Mission and the trading post of a Belgian Company, and this was all until we reached Ingende after seven o'clock. The projector electric light was used, and with its aid we were able to get in to the shore and make fast for the night. We were told the natives had been very excited about the projector light—'the moon' as they called it—and that the reputation of 'the ship that carried the moon' had travelled 200 miles into the interior in a few days."

"*January 13th (on board s.s. Lusanga to Nouvelle Anvers)*.—We never see both banks at the same time because of the innumerable islands studded along the channel. Some of these islands are so large that it may take us three or four hours' steaming to pass them—others are quite small. Some few are floating islands, being merely detached portions of larger islands torn off by the currents and floating by reason of the tangle of jungle roots. It was curious to note one tree on a floating island to be full of birds' nests, and the birds either unconscious that their home was afloat or disregarding the fact."

"*January 31st (Elizabetha)*.—During the morning the Commissaire-Général accompanied us to a 'palaver' with the Ebonda Chief and headmen as to moving the village farther away from our site for works. We assembled in front of the Palaver House, the Commissaire and we other white men in a small group, the Chief and his headmen in a semicircle in front of us, and beyond, groups of women and children. The Commissaire told the Chief that I was a great Chief from the White Man's country, that I wanted his village clean and sanitary, and that I was willing to help to build him a new village on a new site, which new site I would have cleared and prepared for him at my own expense, and that, in addition to giving help to rebuild his village, I would give presents to himself and his headman. Mr. Redard (the Station manager) spoke next in the native language, and a native soldier said some words on behalf of the Commissaire and 'Bula Matadi' (i.e. the Government), and our side had finished. The Chief asked for time for himself and headmen to talk it over, which was, of course, accorded, and the palaver ended. I watched closely the faces of both men and women, and they were set in

a critical, attentive, non-committal, intelligent way, which showed they knew well all that was said and had no intention of giving themselves away by too hasty grunts or nods of approval. At night we received word that they had assented. In the afternoon I prepared a plan for a house for Mr. Redard, copy of which is attached. I want to get a good type of house for Station manager and hope this will turn out satisfactorily."

"*February 12th* (*Kinshasa*).—I had several chats with members of our staff. I found them all very happy, and we can be proud of them as a body got together at short notice to do duties we ourselves can scarcely fully explain and do not ourselves thoroughly understand. Our party broke up about 9.15, and so ends my visit to the Congo. My only regret is that I did not make the journey twelve months earlier. If I have another regret it is that I am not yet certain that I can come again this year. I ought to come out again in November. It is the most important service I can render to the business, and, if at all possible, I intend to come. We have much to do, and we may have many more difficulties than we can foresee to-day, but we hold winning cards if we play them rightly."

That the cards were winning ones will be shown in a later chapter in which my father's second journey to the Congo will be described.

CHAPTER XXII

SHADOW

MY parents landed at La Pallice, in France, on their return from the Belgian Congo, on March 9th, 1913, and two days later were home again at Thornton. My father was in the best of health and spirits, and seemed none the worse for his arduous journey except that his deafness, which had made itself slightly noticeable a little while before, had increased. He attributed it to his having overdosed himself with quinine while in the Tropics. There were two methods of taking quinine then in vogue : the British way—small doses at short and regular intervals—and the German practice—larger doses at longer intervals—and to make assurance double sure my father had followed a combination of both. That this treatment was entirely responsible for the acute deafness from which he suffered towards the end of his life is unlikely, but that it hastened it, by aggravating an existing tendency, is probable. During her journey my mother had crossed the Equator four times, and had accompanied my father almost everywhere he went. Although many of the remote regions to which she penetrated had previously been visited by white women, she was the first European of her sex who had made such a comprehensive tour of the Belgian Congo, and shortly after her return, in recognition of this achievement, she was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society on the motion of Lord Curzon of Kedleston. On the 19th of June my father's services to the Belgian Congo were recognized in the conferment upon him by King Albert of the Cross of Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold II.

In the following July the King and Queen visited industrial Lancashire, staying with the Earl and Countess of Derby at Knowsley, and on July 7th my parents were amongst the guests invited to meet their Majesties at dinner. In the early hours of the following morning a message came through on the telephone to say that "The Bungalow" at Rivington had been burned to the ground, and that the catastrophe was believed to be the work of the Suffragettes. This belief

AEROPLANE VIEW OF PORT SUNLIGHT

was confirmed the next day by the finding near the ruins of a small dispatch-case tied to which was a label addressed to the Home Secretary. Inside the case was a sheet of paper on which were a few typewritten sentences purporting to be "Lancashire's message to the King from the women" urging His Majesty to "wake up" the Government. Two days later, in a Liverpool police court, a woman, arrested for placing a bomb inside commercial premises in the city, claimed to be the person who had set fire to the house. Whether she really was the culprit, or whether she made the claim in order to shield someone else, is not known. In all that campaign of mischievous folly there was no act more illogical than the destruction of "The Bungalow," for Lever had been a supporter of the principle of Woman's Suffrage and had spoken in favour of it on public platforms. In the minds of that small minority, however, the conspicuous landmark of Rivington Pike seemed an ideal stage, especially as the King and Queen were in the neighbourhood, for a display of "frightfulness"—to borrow from the phraseology of the War—in support of their cause, and that was all that mattered. Being of wood, the building was entirely gutted by the fire, and Lever lost many works of art, including some Flemish tapestry and needlework pictures, as well as old family pictures, photographs and records of personal interest. Fortunately no one happened to be sleeping in the house at the time. The King, on hearing of the fire, sent the following telegram to my father :—

"Much regret to learn from newspapers that while you were here last night your house at Rivington and its contents were destroyed by fire, and I sympathize with you in your loss.

"GEORGE R.I."

Two days later, when the King and Queen visited Bolton, and my parents were amongst those presented to Their Majesties at the Town Hall, the King again expressed his sympathy, and inquired as to the extent of the damage. Little time was lost in rebuilding "The Bungalow." "This time I shall build something they cannot burn!" my father said. So he made the house of stone and concrete, and within a year he was again in residence there.

Only a few days after this event there came upon my father with unexpected suddenness the greatest sorrow of his life—the death of my mother. On the 19th of July he had left England

on a visit to some of the Continental Associated Companies, but my mother having engagements to fulfil at home did not accompany him, as it was her almost invariable custom to do. The following day she contracted a severe chill, and twenty-four hours later was pronounced by the doctor to be seriously ill with pneumonia. I telegraphed the grave news to my father, who was then in Marseilles, and he at once hastened home, crossing Paris within the narrow margin of half an hour and just catching the boat-train from the Gare du Nord, which enabled him to reach Thornton the same night. He found my mother sufficiently conscious to know that he was present, but her strength was too far spent for recovery to be possible, and on the 24th of July—only a few hours after his return—she passed away.

Two days later she was laid to rest in the village churchyard at Port Sunlight beneath the western window of Christ Church, in the spot which my father had already chosen for their final resting-place, and in due time he placed above the grave a recumbent effigy of her in bronze, the work of Sir William Goscombe John, R.A. At the foot of its marble base were two figures of children by the same sculptor to symbolize my mother's love for children and theirs for her. Above the grave, and enclosing it, he erected a canopied enclosure or porch, with five Tudor archways, and to complete the memorial he filled the west window of the church with stained glass, the subjects illustrated being "Christ in the Temple," "The Good Housewife" and "Ruth and Naomi." The last-named was of special significance, for the text embodied in the design, "Whither thou goest, I will go," summed up my mother's devotion to my father, and was one of her favourite quotations. The window was unveiled by her brother, Mr. John Hulme, on the 23rd of May, 1914.

My father also placed a window to her memory in St. George's Congregational Church, Thornton Hough. The art of glass staining did not reach this country until after the period of Norman architecture, and a special study was made of the earliest examples of stained glass on the Continent in order that the Norman tradition might be followed and the Norman atmosphere of the church preserved.

It is impossible to describe in words what my father's bereavement meant to him, for my mother had influenced his life's achievements in a way not easily to be explained to those who did not know her intimately, and the sense of loneliness

which fell upon him after her death affected the future course of his life in a manner which possibly he himself hardly realized. The adventure in Lewis and Harris, his further enterprises in a variety of directions—would they have been undertaken had that close companionship remained unbroken? I cannot help feeling that, in many of his added activities, he was seeking a means of escape from thoughts which inevitably forced themselves upon him, unless his mind was occupied—to an even greater extent than before—with problems which demanded nothing less than the whole of the energy and power within him.

In the life of Port Sunlight my mother's death left a gap which has never been filled. The sense of loss was well expressed by the minister of Christ Church, the Rev. L. H. Mills, in his memorial sermon, when he said :—

"She was so well known and so dearly beloved by all of us that we could scarcely have been more conscious of bereavement had the Angel of Death entered our own homes. She meant so much to us in loving sympathy, in practical and unceasing interest in our happiness and welfare, and as an example of beautiful and high-toned character. This influence was by her always unsought and, to a large extent, unconscious. She never claimed any influence or authority. She just wished to be amongst us in Port Sunlight as one of ourselves. Our village gatherings will never be quite the same again. There will be a haunting sense of incompleteness in our assemblies."

As my father's own tribute to her memory I quote the words he spoke nine years after her death at the opening of the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight—his final expression of gratitude for her life and influence :—

"I venture to say that without the gracious influence of my wife I doubt whether there would have been a Port Sunlight; I doubt whether there would have been a firm of the dimensions of Lever Brothers. It would be a poor compliment to my wife if I left you under the impression that she was a business woman, that she could make suggestions about the business, and about building the village and other institutions. She was essentially a womanly woman, and her knowledge of business was nil.

"A wife need not be an inspired genius in guiding and directing her husband—genius might be a handicap and not a help—but she can be an inspiration and source of confidence. What I want this and succeeding generations to know, as they look on this building and its treasures, is that they are the creation, not of genius, but of hard, plodding work within the reach of all who wish to make the necessary sacrifice. The greatest inspiration to me has been the wife I was fortunate enough to win."

CHAPTER XXIII

HIS FOURTH JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD AND THE ROYAL VISIT TO PORT SUNLIGHT

IN September 1913, a few weeks after my mother's death, my father sailed from Liverpool on his fourth voyage round the world, accompanied by my wife and myself. After landing at New York we visited Boston, Philadelphia, Buffalo and Chicago. In Canada our journey lay through Toronto, Winnipeg and the Canadian Rockies to Vancouver. We then sailed across the Pacific to Japan, and from there to Shanghai and Hong-Kong; then to Manila and through the South Seas to Australia, and home by way of the Red Sea and the Mediterranean.

A few years earlier an important scientific discovery had been made which was of great interest to the soap-maker. The oils which he uses fall into two categories—hard oils and soft, tallow being the most characteristic of the former. The gist of the discovery was that by adding hydrogen to a soft oil in the presence of a catalyst, such as nickel, it was found possible to convert it into a hard oil. This enabled the soap-maker to buy whale oil, which was comparatively cheap in price, and turn it after deodorization into an admirable alternative to tallow. Lever Brothers acquired certain valuable patents arising from this discovery, and during the visit to America my father had interviews with the principal American soap-makers with the object of interesting them in the use of these patents.

After visiting Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago and Buffalo, we returned to New York, where my father had invited to a final conference all the principal manufacturers whom he had seen. It was an interesting and unique meeting, and I remember my father making a rough calculation afterwards of the probable combined annual turnover, in all the products of one kind and another which they manufactured, of the five firms which were represented. He estimated that the figure could not be less than 1,000,000,000 dollars.

While in Canada my father acquired The Surprise Soap

Company, of St. Stephen, New Brunswick, and Messrs. W. J. Pendray & Co., of Victoria, British Columbia. These two businesses, together with Messrs. Pugsley, Dingman & Co., of Toronto, and The Royal Crown Soaps, Ltd., of Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver, which had been bought in 1906 and 1911 respectively, consolidated the position of Lever Brothers in Canada by giving them a chain of factories from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts—a great asset in a country of long distances and high freights. The purchase of the St. Stephen business was of additional interest, for it brought into the circle of Lever Brothers its former proprietor, Mr. J. E. Ganong, who became president of the Lever organization in Canada.

We sailed from Vanvouver on October 22nd and arrived at Yokohama a fortnight later. It was my father's first and only visit to Japan, and unfortunately his stay was limited to a fortnight, during almost every hour of which he was engaged in business. A factory had recently been built in Japan at Tori Shinden, on the Inland Sea, about half-way between Kobe and Osaka, and while we were at Kobe a dinner was given to the staff at the Tor Hotel, at which my father made a characteristic speech, some of his familiar anecdotes and toasts being with considerable ingenuity translated into the Japanese language. He also spoke of co-partnership, and of his intention to extend the scheme to Japan. One day when at the factory he said he would like to arrange a picnic for the employees and staff, and the Japanese work-people were asked where they would like to go. They chose, somewhat to our surprise, a place called Minomo, a charming country spot about half an hour's tram ride on the other side of Osaka, famous throughout Japan for the wonderful colouring of its maple-trees in autumn, and their choice shows the deep love of the Japanese for the beauties of nature. The cherry and plum blossoms in spring, the wistaria and azaleas in summer, and the chrysanthemums and maple leaves in autumn are to the Japanese—from the highest in the land to the humblest coolie—annual occasions for picnics and pilgrimages. As he walked in the procession of holiday-makers through the glades of Minomo my father could not help recalling a similar picnic given many years earlier to his English work-people at Llangollen in North Wales. "How did you enjoy it?" one workman had been

overheard to ask another at the end of the day. "Oh, all right, but nothing to see except scenery."

Lever Brothers had not, at that time, works in China; but at Shanghai we looked at several sites, and decisions were made, which, in the course of time, led to the formation of the China Soap & Candle Company and the building of works. After reaching Hong-Kong my father and I sailed up the West River as far as Wuchow, and on the way back spent a day in Canton. At Hong-Kong we were joined by Mr. Joseph Meek, the chairman of Lever Brothers' Australian Company, and from there sailed to German New Guinea, calling on the way at Manila, Yap and Marron in the Hermit Islands. At Rabaul, in German New Guinea, the *Kulambangra*, belonging to Levers' Pacific Plantations, Ltd., awaited us, and from there my father, accompanied by Joseph Meek, went to the Solomon Islands, and afterwards to New Zealand. My wife and I did not accompany my father through the islands. Four years earlier I had spent a month there in the course of a journey round the world, and so, the *Kulambangra's* accommodation being in any case limited, we went direct to Sydney. My father's impressions of the Solomons have been described in an earlier chapter.

He joined us again at Sydney on January 6th, but our stay in Australia was not a long one, for we sailed for home on the Orient liner *Orvieto* on the 23rd of the same month, after brief visits to Melbourne and Adelaide. While in Australia, in pursuance of the policy which had been followed in Canada and South Africa, my father acquired for Lever Brothers an interest in the two principal Australian soap-making firms, Messrs. J. Kitchen & Sons, of Melbourne, Sydney and Newcastle, and Messrs. W. H. Burford & Sons, of Adelaide. The position of Lever Brothers in the three principal self-governing Dominions was thus greatly strengthened, for not only were the leading local firms now associated with them, but the problem of supplying comparatively small populations spread over vast areas was simplified.

On January 10th a picnic for the staff and employees of Lever Brothers' Sydney factory was given by the English visitors at Cabarita on the Parramatta River, and at this gathering my father made a speech which was of considerable interest by reason of two points which he touched upon. The first was the vexed question of the "White Australia Policy." The second,

which attracted little attention at the time, suggests, in the light of later events, that his thoughts were already tending in the direction of that more revolutionary industrial experiment which he advocated so stoutly during the period of reconstruction following the War—" The Six-Hour Day." He had not reached the idea of the six-hour day in 1914, but he spoke on this occasion of a seven-hour day as being the goal at which industrial reformers should aim.

" I have been asked," he said, " whether we will be able to reduce the hours of labour. Believe me, in the reduction of hours of labour you have one of the secrets of the well-being of a country. If you have a country devoting the whole of her time to work, so that her people go home to bed weary, and rise with still weary bones to attack the next day's duties, you will never produce a physically desirable class of men and women. What is wanted in the world to-day is reasonable relief from toil, and if we can shorten the hours of labour we ought to set our minds to such a proposition. We can bring the change about, and with it greater efficiency. Efficiency in the future is going to decide whether the black man, the yellow man, or the white man is eventually to be the governing force of the world. If you aim at efficiency by the introduction of machinery, you can reduce the hours of labour with it. And when you do reach this stage, you will have to consider the question of dividing the day into shifts. Any person running a factory on two shifts of seven hours per day, or forty-two hours per week, can do so without loss. But two shifts must be run, for when machines are standing idle, they depreciate more than if they were running all the time. The ideal system would be two shifts from 6 a.m. till 1 p.m., and from 1 p.m. till 8 p.m., and the time is coming when it will be the rule and not the exception."

The " White Australia " question—whether coloured labour should be permitted on the sugar plantations and elsewhere in Queensland and the Northern Territories—he only touched upon briefly in this speech, returning to it with much greater vigour and persistency during his next visit to the Antipodes in the winter of 1923–4.

At Adelaide we were the guests, at his delightful home there, of a close friend of my father, the late Peter Wood, and during our visit Mr. Wood gave a luncheon, which enabled the leading business men of the city to meet my father and hear him speak upon co-partnership and kindred topics.

A month after our return, on the 25th of March, 1914, the King and Queen visited Port Sunlight, accompanied by the Earl

and Countess of Derby, with whom they were staying at Knowsley. Their Majesties arrived by special train early in the afternoon, and were received on the railway platform by my father, who, after making various presentations, conducted the Royal party and the guests accompanying them to the office vestibule, where further presentations were made. After a tour of the works the King and Queen proceeded to the Hulme Hall, at that time fulfilling the temporary purpose of a museum and art gallery, and there His Majesty laid the foundation-stone of the Lady Lever Art Gallery by pressing an electric button affixed to a scale model of the works and village. Their Majesties then inspected the collection of furniture, pictures and porcelain on exhibition at the Hulme Hall. On leaving the building they asked to see the interior of a representative Port Sunlight house, and a surprise visit was accordingly paid to the home of one of the employees on the opposite side of the road. After a drive through the village, in the course of which they received a loyal greeting from the Port Sunlight school-children, the Royal party left for Birkenhead, where further public ceremonies awaited them.

THE KING AND QUEEN AT PORT SUNLIGHT, MARCH 25, 1914

CHAPTER XXIV

THE WAR

THERE was some irony in the recollection that on July 15th, 1914, only a few days before the sudden outbreak of war, Port Sunlight had been visited by a hundred and fifty delegates, representing no fewer than fifteen nationalities, who were attending a Congress of the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Association. Representatives from Germany, France, Russia, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Spain, America and elsewhere had met together to study the conditions at Port Sunlight and in other industrial communities and, through social intercourse and discussion, to exchange views as to the making of better planned cities, healthier homes and happier conditions of living in the various countries which they represented. Hardly had they returned to their homes, with speeches on international good-will still ringing in their ears, before the greater part of Europe was plunged headlong into the greatest war of history.

At the outbreak of war some 460 National Reservists and Territorials left Port Sunlight. On the 7th of August, 19 members of the Port Sunlight Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade volunteered for service and, after a few words of grateful recognition and encouragement from Sir William Lever, left for the South of England, where they became attached to various units either on the point of leaving for the Front or undergoing training. Early in September Mr. (now Sir) Gershom Stewart, the Member of Parliament for Wirral, set to work to raise a battalion in his constituency for Kitchener's Army. A notice was posted in the Works and Offices at Port Sunlight urging all men who were eligible to offer their services, and Lever promised, in the case of married men, to pay to their wives an allowance equal to the difference between whatever Army pay and allowances they might be in receipt of and their usual wages, while in the case of unmarried men, an undertaking was given to consider on their merits the cases of those having immediate dependents. The Gladstone Hall was turned into

a recruiting office, and of the crowds who flocked there over 700 were enrolled in the new battalion, which became the 13th (Service) Battalion The Cheshire Regiment. On Sunday, September 6th, a farewell service was held in the Auditorium to bid the 700 "God speed," and Lever, in the course of his address to the men, described how, on the previous day, the band of the Port Sunlight Boys' Brigade, the members of which had been peacefully encamped a few weeks earlier in the grounds of "The Bungalow" at Rivington, had led 2,800 of the newly formed "Liverpool Pals," raised by Lord Derby, through the streets of the city, amongst them many recruits from the Liverpool and Port Sunlight offices of Lever Brothers. Continuing his address, he dwelt upon the united front which the country had shown against German militarism. He recalled the military career of Napoleon, pointing out how all the results of his life as a military leader had disappeared, and only his engineering works and his great legal achievement —the Code Napoléon—had survived. In conclusion he discussed the three great tests of a race—courage, purpose and endurance. Proofs that these qualities in the British Army had never been greater were to be found, he said, in the accounts of the battles around Mons and Charleroi.

Early the following morning the recruits of the Wirral Battalion paraded at the Auditorium, where Lever again addressed them. The unit then entrained for Chester, and on its arrival Lever marched at the head of the Port Sunlight men through the streets of the city to the Castle, where the battalion was handed over to General Sir Henry McKinnon. "We are much indebted," Sir Henry said, "to Sir William Lever and his colleagues for the splendid example they have set to all employers of labour, and, when I see this fine body of young men, I have no fear whatever as to the result of the war." The battalion then marched to the Roodee, and later in the day left for training on Salisbury Plain. There the men were short of many comforts and even necessities; cutlery, plates and mugs could not be obtained officially, but Lever speedily arranged for a supply to be sent from Port Sunlight, and he frequently went, or sent a representative, to the War Office to endeavour to expedite the supply of ground-sheets and other essentials which the men needed. On more than one occasion he visited the

battalion during its training, and after they had left for the Front on September 25th, 1915, he kept in the closest touch with their doings. The battalion saw hard trench warfare during the winter and took part in the first Battle of the Somme. They were in the fighting for the Messines Ridge and, later in 1917, they were in the Ypres salient and suffered heavy casualties, especially in the successful attack on Westhoek Ridge. When, in February 1918, the depleted condition of the battalion necessitated its disbandment and the dispersal of its members amongst sister battalions, the official summary of its casualties showed that over 300 had been killed, over 400 were missing, and over 1,500 had been wounded.

It is not possible in these pages to describe in detail the contributions which Port Sunlight made to the fighting forces. Suffice it to say that from the parent company of Lever Brothers in Great Britain and from the daughter Associated Companies in the Dominions and Allied countries, a total of 4,069 men served in the War, of whom 503 made the supreme sacrifice.

The War had not been in progress for many weeks before here began to spring up in various parts of the country Volunteer Training Corps, in which those who were either over military age or had been rejected for active service might be trained in readiness for possible emergencies. The first of such units to be raised in Wirral was The Birkenhead and District Volunteer Training Corps. Lever took an active interest in its formation, and a full company was recruited in Port Sunlight at the end of the year. He joined as a private and for several weeks drilled assiduously, taking his place in a squad of recruits made up of co-directors, managers, foremen, clerks and workmen, and under the instructorship of one of the office commissionaires, an ex-regimental sergeant-major of the Cheshires, passed through the labyrinthine mysteries of squad drill and arms drill to the more violent emotions of extended-order drill. As time went on, however, the increasing claims made upon him by forms of service more suited to his experience, abilities and age—he was then sixty-three—made it impossible for him to remain an active member of the Corps. A little while afterwards, when the Volunteer Training Corps became the Volunteer Force, and their administration was taken over by the War Office, the various units were linked up with the county regiments, and the

Birkenhead Battalion—comprising, in addition to the company from Port Sunlight (of which the present writer was captain), a company from Birkenhead itself, a company from Rock Ferry, and a company composed of employees of the Mersey Railway—then became the 2nd Volunteer Battalion The Cheshire Regiment. After a decision of the authorities that railway-men were not to be embodied in the Volunteers, the last-named company was disbanded and, to take its place, a second company was raised in Port Sunlight. Early in 1918, when the Army Council authorized the appointment to honorary lieutenant-colonelcies in the Volunteer Force of men prominent in their localities and in a position to be of service to the movement, Lever was invited by the Commanding Officer of the Birkenhead battalion, Lieutenant-Colonel M. C. Ellis, V.D., to be its Honorary Commandant, a compliment which he valued highly.

To many war-time charities, including the Prince of Wales's Fund, he was a generous donor, and he did much to help successive War Loans, not only by subscribing himself, but by speaking in support of them. On two occasions—in February and October 1918—he addressed open-air meetings from "The Tank" in Trafalgar Square. Many of the houses and buildings which he owned played their humble part in the War. "The Hill" at Hampstead and "The Bungalow" at Rivington were offered as hospitals soon after the War started, but neither was found suitable. Later on, however, "Cedar Lawn," the house which adjoined "The Hill," and which Lever had bought for the purpose of enlarging his garden, was accepted by the authorities for use as a hospital. When the first rush of Belgian refugees arrived, after the invasion of Belgium, the Hulme Hall, Port Sunlight, gave shelter to over a hundred, but before long the Merseyside district became a prohibited area under the Defence of the Realm Act, and the refugees were then removed to Manchester. At a later date, however, the Hulme Hall became a Red Cross Military Hospital, equipped with 120 beds. Early in 1916 my father placed at the disposal of my wife and myself a large portion of Thornton Manor, including the ball-room annexe, for use as a privately maintained Red Cross Hospital, and the ball-room became a ward with 36 beds, the number being afterwards increased to 52. My wife was Commandant of the hospital from its inception until the work came to a natural

end in 1919, and, with the exception of its medical side, which was in the hands of a trained matron and staff, she was entirely responsible for its administration.

During the course of the War my father served on many important committees. In October 1914 he was appointed a member of the Committee of Princess Mary's Soldiers and Sailors Christmas Fund. In September of the following year he became honorary treasurer of the Star and Garter Home for Disabled Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen at Richmond. The "Star and Garter" was purchased by the members of the Auctioneers and Estate Agents' Institute in August 1915, and presented to the British Red Cross Society. The hotel was afterwards pulled down and the present building, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, erected. My father contributed to the rebuilding fund; and that his experience in building matters was of value to the Committee was recognized in a letter from its chairman, the Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley, saying there "is no one who has a more practical knowledge of these matters than yourself." In October 1915 he gave three pictures to a sale in Manchester in aid of the "Star and Garter" funds, and at a Red Cross sale at Christie's in the following April he bought and presented to the Home a dish given by Queen Alexandra. In November 1916 he attended at Buckingham Palace as treasurer of the "Star and Garter" to receive from the Queen the sum of £150,000 collected by the women of the British Empire for its funds. In March 1920 he endowed, in memory of my mother, two memorial rooms, one at the Sandgate Home and one at Richmond. He also endowed a "Lever" bed at Richmond, and gave a grandfather clock, book-case, furniture and pictures for the furnishing of the Home, and at the end of the War, when the surplus funds in the hands of the Navy and Army Canteen Board were distributed, he was instrumental in obtaining £100,000 for the "Star and Garter."

In January 1915 he became a member of the committee appointed by the War Office, under the title of "The Central Board of Military and Civilian Members to Control Contract Prices and Administration Generally," afterwards called "The Navy and Army Canteen Committee," and he served on this Board until the middle of 1917. In May 1915 he was appointed a member of the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) under the chairmanship of Lord d'Abernon. The duty of the Board

was to make detailed recommendations as to the regulations to be enforced under the Defence of the Realm Act for cutting down the consumption of drink, and it had also to decide upon the areas to which these measures were to apply. The Board ordered a drastic curtailment of the hours during which intoxicating liquor could be sold, placed special restrictions upon the sale of spirits, made " treating " a punishable offence—thereby putting its finger on the cause of much of the trouble—and prohibited the sale of drink on credit. Although Lever was, generally speaking, adverse to State interference with trade, he realized that the problems which confronted the Board in munition areas were exceptional, and he strongly supported the interesting experiment carried out at Carlisle and Gretna under which the liquor interests were acquired and administered by the State. He paid several visits to the area, and was greatly impressed by the improvement which had been made in the conditions under which public-houses were conducted and in the economies which had been made possible by the elimination of unnecessary competition. While the problem of remodelling many of the licensed premises was one which strongly appealed to him on account of his love of architecture and planning, the branch of the Board's work in which he played perhaps the most prominent personal part was in connection with the provision of works canteens. A special Canteens Committee of the Board was formed, of which he was made a member; and his own experience of the management of canteens at Port Sunlight proved of great value to his colleagues.

In addition to his work on these boards and committees of a national character, Lever's responsibilities as chairman of Lever Brothers were greatly increased. The soap industry became one of national importance on account of its by-product, glycerine, which plays an important part in the manufacture of explosives, and the Government required every ounce which the soap-maker could produce. The contribution which Port Sunlight made to the munitions of war was not, however, limited to glycerine. All machinery suitable for the purpose was adapted to the making of shell cases, and, after the first German gas attacks had forced the Allies to use similar measures, important work was undertaken in the research laboratories in connection with the investigation and preparation of gases and also of smoke

screens. After the formation of the Ministry of Munitions a special " Oils and Fats " branch was created to control the supply and distribution of these raw materials, and Lever was appointed a member of the standing advisory committee appointed to assist the Controller of Oils and Fats.

In addition to the works at Mannheim, in Germany itself, two of the associated factories of Lever Brothers on the Continent fell into enemy hands, namely, the one at Lille, in France, and the one at Forest Midi, near Brussels. Monsieur Brauen, the chairman of the Belgian Company, was forced to leave the factory, but his works manager, Mr. A. L. Webster, the present chairman, was able to remain at his post just long enough to forestall the enemy in their use of the plant necessary for the production of glycerine by carrying out, with the aid of some of the Belgian staff, various acts of sabotage which rendered it useless. When the German authorities became unpleasantly persistent in their inquiries, Webster, who spoke French and Flemish fluently and with a perfect accent, vanished and—after he had had time to grow a beard—there appeared in his place one Réné Oriens, noted for his interest in the poor of Brussels. In this disguise, knowing only too well the fate which the discovery of his identity would bring, he remained in Brussels throughout the occupation ; and the glycerine plant continued to be—to use his own words—" mysteriously inefficient."

The following brief extracts from Lever's speeches at the annual meetings of Lever Brothers held during the years of the War touch upon some of the principal events in the firm's history during that period, the dates given being those upon which the speeches were delivered :—

" *25th March*, 1915.—We are building new works in Holland on a very fine site on the River Maas at Vlaardingen, a suburb of Rotterdam. We have built extensions to our works at Boston, Japan, Sydney and Toronto. We have acquired interests in new associated companies in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa ; and last, but not least, we have acquired an interest in the Ordinary shares of Messrs. Pears, who are the greatest firm of toilet-soap makers in the United Kingdom."

" *30th March*, 1916.—The total number of co-partners to-day stands at 3,490, and the equivalent value of the Co-partnership certificates now issued totals £509,213, so that the first half-million is used up and we have begun to cut into the second half-million. . . . We have to

mourn the death of Mr. Macchi, the chairman of our Lille Company. An Italian by birth, he came to us seventeen and a half years ago. At the outbreak of war he found himself, as the Italian Consul in Lille, able to remain at his post of duty, and although the Germans took possession of our works, although they dug trenches through the yards and quartered 1,200 German troops in the works, he insisted on remaining at his post. Mrs. Macchi was with him, and when the bombardment was taking place, their house was battered round them while they were in the basement. I believe the experience he then had, while trying nobly to fulfil his duty, shortened his life."

"*29th March*, 1917.—I am sorry to tell you that since our last meeting we have lost the best solicitor any company ever had—my friend, Mr. Harley. I have expressed in another place at a greater length than is possible to-day, his high services to the Company and the great esteem in which he was held by my colleagues and myself and by all who knew him. . . . We formed a Victory War Loan Association, contributed to by the directors, managers, foremen, rank and file and members of the staff, and we have been able to subscribe £271,300. . . . All the new developments we have entered into during the War are only such as to enable us to assist in the success of the War. We have been requested to go into most of them by the Government and we have responded readily. One is margarine, which is quite a new departure for us, and not in any way connected with us prior to the War. The sale of margarine was largely in the hands of neutrals in Holland and the difficulty of maintaining our supplies were such that in the early days of the War the Government asked us if we could not commence margarine manufacture, and we did so.

"*26th March*, 1918.—We bought some two years ago a fleet of ships which, together with one brought from Australia and two others which we built, made a fleet of nine vessels to bring our products from West Africa to the United Kingdom. Of these ships, four have been torpedoed by the enemy."

On June 4th, 1917, Sir William Lever was raised to the Peerage. As his title he chose the name Leverhulme, thus linking his wife's maiden name with his own, and as his territorial designation—a necessary adjunct to the full style and title of a peer—"of Bolton-le-Moors," his birthplace. The College of Arms, rightly the guardian of tradition and precedent, at first raised difficulties with regard to the name "Leverhulme," as no previous example of a joint word of this kind was to be found in the records of the Peerage, but eventually the necessary sanction was given, and the new Peer took his seat in the House of Lords on the 24th of July, his introducers being Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Stanmore. On July 26th Lord Beaver-

brook entertained him at a complimentary dinner, amongst the guests being the Prime Minister (Mr. Lloyd George), Mr. Bonar Law, Lord Reading, Mr. Winston Churchill, Sir F. E. Smith (Lord Birkenhead), Sir Owen Philipps (Lord Kylsant), Sir Samuel Evans (President of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division), Mr. T. M. Healy and Sir Edward Goulding (Lord Wargrave).

On June 29th, 1917, Leverhulme celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his entry into business, and as a memento his colleagues presented to him an album containing a message from the Board of Lever Brothers and letters and resolutions from the Associated Companies. On the album's illuminated title-page were illustrations representing the successive phases of his career—his father's warehouse in Manor Street, Bolton, where he had started work as a boy; the branch of Lever & Co. at Wigan which, as a young man, he had established and developed; the first works of Lever Brothers at Warrington; Port Sunlight as it appeared in 1889; the first Overseas works opened in Switzerland in 1899; the first associated factory in England—R. S. Hudson, Ltd.—affiliated in 1907; and finally the Port Sunlight of the present day. Owing to the War, he did not wish for any elaborate celebration of his business jubilee, but in order that he might revive memories and associations of his earlier years, he invited to dine with him at Rivington all the survivors of the staff of the Lever Wholesale Grocery Company who had been with him at the time he severed his connection with it.

In the autumn of 1917 Leverhulme acted as President of the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales held in Birkenhead, and at the Bardic Gorsedd in Birkenhead Park, which preceded the Eisteddfod itself, he received the honorary degree of Ovate (a term derived from the Welsh word "ofydd," meaning philosopher). In his Presidential address he referred to the appropriateness of the choice of Birkenhead for this national gathering of Welshmen, not only because of the number of Welsh people in the borough, but also by reason of the fact that up to the seventh century the whole of Wirral had been as Welsh as Denbigh and Carnarvon are to-day. The speech also dealt with economic problems after the War, and touched upon his proposals for a six-hour working day, a subject which is dealt with in the next chapter. The Prime Minister attended

the Eisteddfod and, with Mrs. Lloyd George and his younger daughter, stayed as Leverhulme's guest at Thornton Manor from the 4th to the 8th of September. Included in the house party, in addition to the Prime Minister's secretarial staff, were Sir Vincent Evans, Sir George (now Lord) Riddell and Dr. (now Sir Richard) Terry, the organist of Westminster Cathedral. On the last morning of their visit Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd George paid a visit to Port Sunlight and received an enthusiastic ovation during their progress through the works and village. After the last section of the factory had been inspected, permission was given to the employees to leave their work, and a cheering crowd quickly surrounded the Prime Minister, who, in response to demands for a speech, spoke as follows :—

"I was anxious to see these world-famed works, and I have been more than pleased with what I have witnessed. They show what can be done by one man of great organizing genius who has also got a good heart. These works are a triumph of organization and kind-heartedness ; and if, in all the works of the country, these two things are put together, they spell one word, and that is 'efficiency.' It has been a great lesson to me and a great joy to me to see these works. I went through the dining-rooms. There is nothing that conduces to a good appetite like a cheerful dining-room. I liked the pictures there. They show that Lord Leverhulme has not put his efficiency into machinery only but also into things that make for the amenities of working life. He is one of the pioneers of the works of the future ; and, believe me, when works in the future are less squalid than they are now, the workers will look back to the days when Lord Leverhulme put the whole of his great brain into the business of making works more attractive. The work-people of the country owe him a debt of gratitude, and I am glad to come here and pay him that tribute."

On November 16th, 1918, five days after the signing of the Armistice, a memorable gathering of all the available ex-Service men belonging to Lever Brothers was held in the Auditorium, at which Mr. Gershom Stewart, M.P., as "the executor" of the 13th Cheshires, presented to the directors a silver statuette to commemorate their association with the battalion. In acknowledging the gift, Leverhulme spoke of the lessons which might be learnt from the War and the golden opportunity which the future offered for carrying on the industries of the country under happier conditions and in a spirit of mutual understanding. Would their prosperity and the prosperity of others engaged in

industry, he asked his audience, be better achieved by perpetual warfare, perpetual antagonism—by a feeling on the part of the employer that his sole aim and object must be to get from his workmen as much work in as long hours and with as low wages as possible, and by a feeling on the part of the workmen that their object was to do as little work as possible and to get the highest possible wages? Would it not be better, he said, to have some basis for the division of the products of industry, commonly called profits, amongst those who produced the profits, thus ending the perpetual opposition of interests?

On August 22nd, 1922, an even more significant tribute was paid to Port Sunlight's part in the brief but glorious history of the 13th Cheshires, for on that day the "King's Colour," which since its consecration in 1919 had been resting in the Garrison Church of St. Mary-on-the-Hill, Chester, was transferred to Christ Church, Port Sunlight. A "colour party" composed of Port Sunlight men belonging to the 4/5th Battalion The Cheshire Regiment (Territorial Army) escorted the emblem through the village to the lychgate of the church, where the minister received it and handed it to Lord Leverhulme, who carried it up the centre aisle and placed it on the chancel steps. Towards the end of the service it was taken to its permanent position in the south transept, where the Chairman and directors of Lever Brothers had placed a bronze tablet in commemoration of the battalion.

In April 1919 the directors entertained at a dinner all the employees and members of the staff who had served in the War, and after the dinner a concert was given in the Auditorium, prefaced by a short meeting at which Leverhulme invited the Right Hon. J. R. Clynes, M.P., Food Controller during the last year of the War, to be the principal speaker. Soon after this gathering the "United Comrades Federation" of Lever Brothers was formed as a branch of the British Legion, and similar dinners and concerts continue to be held in commemoration of Armistice Day. Leverhulme never failed to preside over these reunions whenever he was in England.

My father held strong views on the subject of war memorials, and had urged that the one to be erected in Port Sunlight after the War should be symbolical rather than utilitarian. The village cross, the lychgate, the sculptured monument,

make no attempt to fulfil a double purpose or to serve any material end, and he felt that, generations hence, a work of art created for the sole purpose of paying homage to the fallen would still speak its message, whereas the original significance of a purely utilitarian building might be forgotten. He foresaw that, after the War, our leading sculptors would be inundated with commissions for memorials and, as early as the beginning of 1916, he discussed with Sir William Goscombe John, R.A., the question of a memorial for Port Sunlight, the *motif* of which was to be "The Defence of the Home." Several preliminary models were made, and the original scheme was much elaborated before the final design was arrived at. The Memorial, which stands in the centre of "The Diamond," takes the form of a Runic cross in granite, at the foot of which is a group of figures in bronze—two soldiers defending women and children, a wounded comrade at their side. On the pedestal supporting the cross and figures are the names of the fallen, and round the base runs a parapet, eighty feet in diameter, having on its outer side groups in bas-relief representing the Navy, Army, Air Force and Medical services. The four approaches to this outer parapet are flanked by eight sculptured groups of children. "By his art," said Leverhulme in speaking of Sir William Goscombe John at the unveiling ceremony, "he has produced sermons in stone and metal that will teach us our duty without humiliating or lecturing us." The Memorial was unveiled on December 3rd, 1921, by T. G. Eames, an employee of Lever Brothers who was blinded in the first Battle of the Somme, assisted by a member of the firm's London office staff, R. E. Cruickshank, who won the Victoria Cross in Palestine. In his address at the unveiling ceremony Leverhulme spoke as follows :—

"We are assembled here to witness the unveiling of our village record and our tribute to the brave men who, from the firing of the first gun to the winning of victory, offered themselves and their bodies as a shield and defence of our liberties. We are to see it unveiled by one who bears upon his body the disablement, the wounds, the injuries and scars of this great war. I find myself overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task of addressing myself with adequate justice to the bravery this monument commemorates, of giving expression to the feelings that are welling up in our hearts at this moment. We cannot honour these brave men, neither the dead nor the living; they have honoured us. . . . In winning victory you achieved a noble task, but your task here at

home and throughout the British Empire is to-day a still nobler one. The result of victory is not a reward but a new task—a task only yourselves can perform. Your and our task—your and our nobler task—is to win and to consolidate the peace. The foundation of war is hatred of our enemies. The foundation of peace is brotherly love and the banishment of all hatred, even of those nations who so recently were our enemies. Trade and commerce must be turned to their normal channels, or we endure the agonies of unemployment with attendant hunger, sickness and suffering beyond mortal strength to endure. We must restore trade and commerce to its accustomed channels with our former enemies. We must forget they ever were our enemies. After all, it is not the people of enemy kingdoms who began the War, but their rulers and governments. These governments and rulers have gone, never to return.

"Christmas-time is drawing near—the New Year will soon begin. Let us all, now, at this Christmas season, consecrate ourselves to the nobler task of restoring peace and good will, love and fellowship, trade and commerce with all peoples—with our former enemies no less than with our sorely tried and true and trusted Allies. That is our nobler task and the best memorial to our Glorious Dead."

CHAPTER XXV

THE SIX-HOUR DAY AND OTHER SCHEMES

IT was a favourite remark of my father that, whereas the greatest achievements of the nineteenth century lay in the field of mechanical invention and in the discovery of new forms of power and energy, the primary problem to be solved by the twentieth century would be the human one—the man behind the machine rather than the machine itself. To the truth of this opinion the first quarter of the present century has certainly borne witness, for the greatest task confronting statesmen to-day is to find some durable solution of that great perplexity generally referred to as the "Labour Question," so that our industries, struggling manfully under the burdensome conditions caused by the Great War—fierce international competition, fluctuating exchanges, heavy taxation and many others—may have an opportunity to regain their former prosperity, and thereby reduce unemployment with all its degenerating effects. Labour desires, and, as Leverhulme frequently pointed out, with reason and justice, a more equitable share in the fruits of industry, better conditions under which to live and work, and a greater margin of leisure for recreation and the enjoyment of those forms of happiness for which increased education has created a demand.

Co-partnership and the housing and industrial conditions at Port Sunlight stand out as Leverhulme's most important and practical contributions to the solution of our present-day labour problems, and their influence will be admitted by all save those who are jealous or suspicious of any proposals made by an employer-capitalist, and who suggest that selfishness is the guiding motive in all camps save their own. But more revolutionary and provocative than either his Co-partnership scheme or his creation of Port Sunlight was Leverhulme's proposal—as a means of increasing national output, and at the same time of ensuring more leisure—of a working day of two six-hour shifts. He had been an advocate of a shorter working day all his business

life. He had been one of the first employers in the country to introduce an eight-hour day, and the reader will recall that, when visiting Australia in the winter before the outbreak of war, he had spoken of a seven-hour day as the next goal to aim at. During the War his convictions had been further strengthened by the statistics furnished by munition works—many of them personally visited by himself—which showed that the longer working hours which the exigencies of the time seemed to warrant had not yielded a larger output per worker but, owing to fatigue and loss of time, the reverse, and further, that when the working hours of munition workers had been curtailed, their output had increased. His scheme for a six-hour day, however, was far more than merely a suggestion for a still shorter working day. It rested, not on an appeal to humanitarian feeling—the arguments which the great Lord Shaftesbury had used when urging a reduction of the daily hours of toil to ten could hardly be applied in support of a proposal to reduce them from eight to six—but on a clearly defined economic fact, namely, that in most industries, under existing conditions, machinery was underworked and usually became obsolete long before it was worn out ; and that by running it for longer hours " overhead charges," including interest on capital, depreciation, repairs, renewals and administrative expenses, would be spread over a larger output with a consequent reduction in costs. The two-shift system would provide new reserves of leisure, and the uses to which they could be put were an integral part of the scheme and in Leverhulme's opinion as important to the national well-being as the direct industrial advantages which he looked for. Incidentally, he saw that the additional hours of leisure would be a stimulant to trade, for, to use his own words, " leisure increases wants whilst over-fatigue and long hours decrease them."

His first pronouncements on the Six-Hour Day were made early in 1917, when the problem of national reconstruction after the War had already begun to occupy the attention of industrialists and politicians. He gave a brief but concise sketch of his scheme at the annual meeting of Lever Brothers' shareholders on March 29th, 1917, and developed and elaborated his proposals during the following two years in a succession of papers, speeches and addresses, which provoked widespread interest and controversy. His commercial reputation assured for him a measure

of universal attention which might have been lacking in the case of a purely theoretical economist, and the fact that this advocacy of a six-hour day came from one who himself worked for about sixteen hours a day added a note of piquancy which was not lost upon the Press and Public. He was inundated with invitations to speak, and almost week by week conferences of one kind or another, Chambers of Commerce, Literary and Debating Societies, "P.S.A.s," Brotherhood meetings and Rotary Clubs afforded him a variety of platforms from which to enlighten a diversity of audiences.

The immediate problems of post-war reconstruction increased, in Leverhulme's opinion, the need for the two-shift system which was the basis of his scheme. Exhausted stocks, both in home and export markets, would necessitate, he considered, an increased production of at least 50 per cent. above pre-war standards; in addition to this about a million new houses would be required and many millions of tons of shipping needed to replenish the mercantile marine. The shortage would not be in men and women, for several millions would be released from active service and war work of various kinds, but in factories and workshops, plant and machinery. To quote his own words: "By the adoption of the six-hour working day we could automatically and immediately increase our production by at least 50 per cent. just as effectively as if we had been able to build 50 per cent. more factories, workshops, plant and machinery. And we could do this without making any call on capital or any call on labour for the mere erection of these mechanical utilities." The system, he urged, was already applicable, without loss, to industries in which the "overhead charges" were equal to the cost of wages. "But in most factories," he said, "the cost of production in the form of overhead charges is double or more the cost of wages. In all these cases the six-hour day can be applied forthwith with enormous gains in the cost of production provided the supply of raw material and of labour is available and the demand for products exists."

To illustrate his point he took the following example: If in a forty-eight-hour week a certain factory produced 1,000 items per week at a cost of £1,000 per week for overhead charges and of £1,000 per week for wages, the total resulting cost per item (exclusive of raw material) would be £2. Under the

six-hour day the factory would be run for seventy-two hours per week (two shifts of thirty-six hours each) and—assuming no increased production per hour worked was achieved and that the same wages were paid for six hours as were formerly paid for eight—it would turn out 1,500 items at a cost of £2,000 for wages, and £1,000 for overhead charges, making the total cost £3,000 or still £2 per item. Even so, therefore, increased output would be gained at the same cost per item. But assuming that, through reduced fatigue coupled with added effort, the worker could produce more items per hour in the six-hour shift, the new scheme would witness a reduction in cost as well as an increase in output.

The first shift was to be from six or seven o'clock in the morning until twelve or one o'clock, and the second from twelve or one until six or seven o'clock in the evening. The shifts were to alternate so that an individual worker would have his mornings free one week and his afternoons the next week. Of the additional spare time procured under the scheme he suggested that two hours a day might be requisitioned by the State in the case of people from fourteen to eighteen years of age for secondary education together with physical training; in the case of those between eighteen and twenty-four for technical education and training of a University character, with extended physical training; and in the case of those between twenty-four and thirty for defensive military training on a "Territorial" basis and other forms of national service, as well as for education in the duties of citizenship and the principles of local government. These proposals were made during the War, it must be remembered, when men were envisioning the wonderful possibilities which might be achieved in times of peace by the same united national effort which the War had called into being. "The organizing of our time in this way," Leverhulme said, "would give us a fully educated nation, a nation capable of assuming responsibility, and with initiative. We should all be the better for it—we should have better bodies and better minds; not even the University education could compare with the education which would be obtained under the above conditions simultaneously through hand and eye and brain. The man in the University gets his brain developed, but if he had simultaneously the training of hand which manual industries impose upon those

who work in factories, his brain would be better for that discipline and for that training of hand and eye." The quotation is from Leverhulme's book, *The Six-Hour Day and Other Industrial Questions*, with a preface by Viscount Haldane, published by Messrs. Allen & Unwin in 1918. This volume, which was edited by Mr. Stanley Unwin, comprises articles, speeches and addresses upon "The Six-Hour Day," "Co-partnership" and other Labour problems, and it will be found invaluable by those who wish for a more detailed exposition of Leverhulme's industrial philosophy than the limits of this biography allow.

Leverhulme was naturally anxious to apply the principles of the Six-Hour Day to his own works at Port Sunlight, and soon after the War an adaptation of the scheme was worked out and considered in detail by committees representing both the management and the employees. The morning shift was to begin at seven o'clock and, with a break of a quarter of an hour at 8.45 for light refreshment—provided free by the Company—was to continue until 1.15. Owing to a strong desire to retain the Saturday half-holiday the afternoon shift was to be from 1.15 to 9.0 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from 1.15 to 8.45 on Fridays, with a break of half an hour for refreshment. As discussion proceeded, however, it became evident that a great many difficulties stood in the way of the practical application of the system to one factory only. The proposals entailed not only a reorganization of the employees' working lives but of their social lives as well, and while they were sympathetic in principle, they were critical in detail. The trade unions also raised difficulties and, in the end, the scheme was not proceeded with.

Many industrial reforms are difficult to apply sectionally; Daylight Saving might be taken as an instance. Imagine one part of the country keeping to Greenwich time and another to Summer time, and the confusion which would ensue! How much greater would the chaos be if Daylight Saving were applied only to certain particular factories and the work-people attached to them. So with the policy of a six-hour day its isolated application is in many ways a more difficult matter than its general adoption would be. The Six-Hour Day has many more complications than Daylight Saving, but one recalls that the late William

Willett's proposals were treated only as a pleasant theory until they were finally adopted, not as a means of securing the extra hour of daylight for open-air recreation, but as a measure for war-time economy in fuel and power, and one wonders whether some great emergency of the future will not in the same way call the six-hour day into being. Of one thing, however, we may be certain, and that is that if at some future date the Nation does experience the extra work-free hours which the two-shift system offers, the public will wonder, as it does in the case of Daylight Saving, why the device was not introduced long ago!

Although the Six-Hour Day, to which Leverhulme gave so much thought before and after the end of the War, proved to be too sweeping a proposal to be tried on a small scale, the same period saw the introduction by him of several other characteristic schemes and innovations, which gave the finishing touches to his unique record as a pioneer in industrial welfare work and prosperity sharing. The first was the Staff Training College at Port Sunlight. For many years it had been a rule of the firm that boys and girls entering the offices from the Elementary schools were to attend evening classes at the Company's expense until they were eighteen years of age. But, although this system was a move in the right direction, Leverhulme was never quite satisfied with it, because at the end of a working day the mind is too fatigued to obtain the full benefit of further study. He decided, therefore, that the Company must have its own college, to be conducted, both with regard to hours and curriculum, so as to meet the special requirements of the business, and in the spring of 1917 the Staff Training College was opened. The first village schools, which had been built in Bridge Street in 1896, and which had in the meantime been superseded by new Council schools, became the home of the college, and have proved ideal for the purpose. Attendance at the college—in the Company's time and without deduction of pay—is compulsory for all junior employees in the factory from fourteen to sixteen years of age and for all apprentices to skilled trades, during the years of their apprenticeship, and also for all juniors from fourteen to eighteen years of age in the offices. Voluntary evening classes are also held during the winter months for adults, for which a small fee is charged, returnable at the end of the session

to those who have attended regularly and proved themselves serious students. French and German, English literature, accountancy and commercial practice, physical and manual training, as well as elementary courses in chemistry and engineering, all form part of the work of the college, and many voluntary activities have grown up amongst the students, including an enterprising dramatic circle, which has given capable performances of plays of Shakespeare and Sir James Barrie.

Two other important developments in the life of Port Sunlight, initiated by Leverhulme after the War, were the formation of the Port Sunlight Recreations Association and the establishment of the Employees' Holiday Camp. In 1919 Lever Brothers purchased the show-grounds at Bebington belonging to the Birkenhead and Wirral Agricultural Society and converted them, together with some adjoining fields, into recreation grounds covering about 120 acres and comprising playing fields for cricket, football and hockey, a cycling and running track, and tennis-courts.

The idea of a week-end holiday camp for the work-people had long been in Leverhulme's mind, and the opportunity of carrying it out came in 1919, when it was found possible to acquire an ideal site for such a camp on the shore of the Dee estuary, near the small village of Thurstaston, about nine miles by road and forty minutes by train from Port Sunlight. On this piece of ground hutments were erected to accommodate altogether about two hundred people, with separate sections for men and women and special quarters for married couples and their families. The success of the scheme has abundantly justified Leverhulme's faith in it.

In 1919 he instituted at Port Sunlight a system for the payment of wages through a banking account instead of by cash. An employee who wished to do so—the scheme was entirely voluntary—could open an account at a local bank and have his wages credited to it each week, the bank's rate of interest being supplemented by the Company up to 4 per cent. The banks were to notify the firm of the total amounts required for this additional interest, but no particulars of individual employees' accounts were to be given to the Company. The object of the innovation was to promote thrift and to engender that sense of

responsibility which the possession of a banking account, however modest, creates. Referring to the system at the annual meeting of Lever Brothers in 1924, Leverhulme was able to announce that over 41 per cent. of the weekly wage staff had availed themselves of it.

Although an addition was made to the number of houses at Port Sunlight and Bromboro' Port after the War, it was not possible to supply the whole of the increased demand which had arisen, and as a contribution towards the solution of the housing problem, not only as it affected the employees at Port Sunlight but also the district as a whole, Leverhulme decided in 1922 to develop an area of land on the western boundary of the village, known as the Edgeworth Estate, and to offer free plots of land, of about five hundred square yards, to applicants, whether employed by Lever Brothers or not, who were prepared to build houses of approved design. Under the scheme an applicant, on being allotted a site, pays a peppercorn rent for the land until the house is completed, when it becomes his own freehold property. He selects his own architect and builder and, after obtaining from the local authority whatever building subsidy he may be entitled to, finances the construction of his new home through a building society, Lever Brothers advancing him a sufficient sum to meet the builder's requirements until the Society has paid the first instalment. The plan has worked with admirable success. The demand for plots has kept steadily ahead of their supply and, viewed from the material standpoint, the advantage of having increased housing accommodation in the immediate vicinity of the factory for the more enterprising type of employee, has fully justified the giving of the land and the proportion of the cost of laying out the estate.

Three other important post-war schemes which Leverhulme introduced at Port Sunlight were first unfolded by him in his speech at the annual Co-partnership meeting on the 27th of July, 1922, when he referred to them as "The Laying of the Three Ghosts." The three ghosts which haunted the average worker through life were, he explained, firstly, premature death—the fear of leaving a young wife and family unprovided for—secondly, unemployment and "short time," and, thirdly, sickness. The methods by which he sought to lay the ghosts were

Group Life Insurance and a system of half-pay during unemployment, short time and sickness. Briefly the three schemes, which are all on a non-contributory basis, are :—

Group Life Insurance.—Each co-partner is presented by the Company, under an arrangement made with an Assurance Company, with a free life insurance policy, the amounts of the policies varying in accordance with the responsibilities and qualifications of individuals within the following limits :—

Employees in the Works and Office staff ..	from £100 to £1,000
Foremen, heads of departments and junior managers	from £200 to £2,000
Higher management and directorate ..	from £400 to £4,000

The Company undertakes to pay the subsequent annual premiums and may add to or vary an individual policy. The firm continues to pay the premiums in cases of superannuation or retirement on pension, but, in the event of an assured's engagement with the Company ceasing, he may continue his assurance, without medical examination, at the Insurance Company's ordinary rate of premium.

Unemployment Half-Pay.—A co-partner, during any period of "short time" or suspension from employment not caused by any act of his own, receives *ex gratia* from the Company such a sum as, added to the State allowance, will equal half his standard weekly rate of wages.

Sickness Half-Pay.—A co-partner prevented through illness from working for at least seven consecutive days receives the same allowance as in the case of unemployment. At the end of four weeks the Company considers each case on its merits.

In the case of Life Insurance the scheme applies to all co-partners and those eligible for co-partnership in Lever Brothers and many of the Associated Companies at home and abroad (in other words, to those of twenty-one years of age and over who have completed one full year's service). The other two schemes were confined, in the first instance, to the Port Sunlight factory and associated undertakings within a two-mile radius of it.

Many of Leverhulme's undertakings were cut short by his death, but in the sphere of industrial relationships he was spared to put the finishing touches to his life's work. In concluding this chapter, let us sum up his contribution, and the extent of his example, by setting against the main risks, difficulties and problems of industrial life the steps which he took, in his own business, to reduce or overcome them.

Inadequate and unhealthy housing, and sordid or unattractive surroundings.	The village of Port Sunlight with its social and recreative amenities.
Unsuitable working conditions.	The works at Port Sunlight.
Long hours, fatigue and monotony of industrial life.	He was a pioneer in the introduction of an eight-hour day and worked out and left on record his scheme for a six-hour day.
A more adequate division of the fruits of industry.	The Co-partnership Trust in Lever Brothers, Ltd., and "Prosperity Sharing."
Old Age.	Pensions paid out of Employees' Benefit Fund, and Preferential Co-partnership certificates.
Provision for widow and family.	Group Life Insurance, pensions from Employees' Benefit Fund and Preferential Co-partnership certificates.
Involuntary unemployment.	Half-pay unemployment allowance.
Accident and sickness.	Half-pay sickness allowance, which also applies to cases of accidents not fully covered by Workmen's Compensation Act.
Secondary education.	The Staff Training College.
Accident prevention and health.	One of the first employers to introduce a Safety First campaign and appoint a safety inspector. Built the Port Sunlight Cottage Hospital and instituted in the factory a dental clinic and ophthalmic surgery, with free treatment and advice for junior employees.

New schemes were constantly being evolved in Leverhulme's mind, and it seems unlikely that, had he lived, further ones would not have been forthcoming; at the same time, with this summary before one, it is difficult to see in what part of the industrial field he would have found the necessary virgin soil.

CHAPTER XXVI

LEWIS AND HARRIS

PEOPLE often asked, "What objective inspired or misled Lord Leverhulme" (the words used depending upon the sympathies of the questioner) "to purchase the Islands of Lewis and Harris? Was his purpose a commercial one or was his motive simply public-spiritedness?" The question was not unreasonable, for it was difficult, on the one hand, to name a part of the United Kingdom less likely to yield a profitable return or, on the other hand, to discover a spot with less claim upon his resources than had these remote islands of the Outer Hebrides, whose inhabitants look upon even the Highlanders of the Scottish mainland as "strangers." The answer lay in the fact that for some little while before his purchase of Lewis in the autumn of 1917 Leverhulme had felt that the time was approaching when he should consider giving less detailed attention to the affairs of Lever Brothers, partly because the business had reached a stage in its development when it seemed no longer to demand the whole of the time and energy which he had at his disposal, and partly because he thought it wise in the future interests of the firm that some measure of his personal authority and responsibility should gradually, but increasingly, devolve upon those who would succeed him. A man of different temperament might have found a convenient and pleasant line of retreat on a grouse moor, a yacht, or in a villa in the South of France, but Leverhulme had lost what little interest he had formerly had in sport, and he could not have endured a *dolce far niente* existence for a week. For him recreation meant a change of occupation and, next to the development of a business, he found his greatest pleasure in the development of an estate. It was in search of an estate, therefore, that he went, not with feverish haste, but quietly and with deliberation. As a matter of fact, he gave serious consideration to and nearly decided to buy an important estate in the Midlands which was then for sale, but its development had already been begun, and he preferred to find one which he

could mould to his own ideas from the start. It was shortly after this that the Island of Lewis, then the property of Colonel Duncan Matheson, was offered to him.

The Lewis, which by itself is not, strictly speaking, an island, although colloquially referred to as one, is the most northerly region of the Outer Hebrides. The area of Lewis alone is about seven hundred and seventy square miles, and of Lewis and Harris together about a thousand square miles. The population of Lewis, according to the census of 1921, is 33,563, of which a little over a tenth is in the town of Stornoway. It is a bare windswept land with hardly a tree to be found upon it except in the precincts of Lews Castle, which stands on rising ground overlooking Stornoway harbour. The northerly two-thirds of the island is comparatively flat and consists of rolling moorland, rich in peat, with but little arable land, and that of poor quality. The southerly third of Lewis, as well as the whole of Harris, is rugged and mountainous, threaded by numberless streams and dotted with hundreds of lochs, the largest being Loch Langabhat, nine miles in length, the waters of which pass through a chain of four smaller lochs on their way to the Atlantic and constitute the famous Grimersta fishings, with their record catch in 1888 of fifty-four salmon to one rod in one day. The natives of Lewis are a hardy, thrifty and independent race, of Celtic and Norse origin, but on account of their geographical position they have lagged behind the people of the mainland in many aspects of their development and mode of life. Outside Stornoway—which is a comparatively prosperous fishing town and no more representative of the Lewis as a whole than, say, New York is representative of the Middle West of America—Gaelic is still the common language of the people, although English is taught in the schools. The most abiding memory which one carries away from the island is of "the black houses," as they are called, with their adjoining "crofts" of from three to five acres. The black house is built by the crofter himself, helped by his neighbours. The walls, of great thickness, are constructed of rough stones, the spaces between the stones being filled with rubble or earth, and the roof is made of sods placed on rafters and covered with thatch. There are usually three apartments—the outer one, called "the byre," which provides a shelter for whatever livestock or poultry the crofter may possess,

and next to this the living-room, and adjoining it, the bedroom. There is no fireplace, a peat fire being built in the centre of the living-room. The smoke escapes either through a hole in the roof or by percolating through the thatch, which is removed from time to time and used as a manure on the croft, for which purpose, being well saturated with carbon from the smoke, it is highly serviceable. There is, however, a more modern type of black house, in which fireplaces and chimneys have been introduced, and which is rapidly displacing the true black house. Dwellings of this more recent type now form the homes of the majority of the people.

The husbands and sons may leave the crofts for the fishings, but always return to them for the seed-times and harvests. The women do most of the everyday work, dig the peats and carry them, when they are dried, in creels on their backs, often for long distances, their loads frequently weighing as much as eighty pounds. The daughters leave home in the summer and follow the herring fleets from Stornoway, round the North of Scotland and down the East Coast of England as far as Yarmouth, to gut, clean and pack the herrings.

In 1844 the Island of Lewis was bought from the Mackenzies of Seaforth by Sir James Matheson, who retired there after many years in China, where he had founded the firm of Jardine, Matheson & Co. and amassed a considerable fortune. Sir James built Lews Castle, laid out its well-timbered policies, and spent a large sum in a courageous effort to improve the conditions of the people. It was from his grand-nephew, Colonel Duncan Matheson, that Leverhulme acquired the island. In October 1917, before definitely deciding to buy the Lewis, Leverhulme spent a week there and, accompanied by his own agent, Mr. Frank Clarke, and " the Chamberlain of the Lews "—the factor responsible for the administration of the Lewis Estates—motored over almost every road in the island from the Butt of Lewis in the north to the marches of Harris in the south. He was enraptured with his visit, for here was far more than an estate of the type for which he had been seeking. He saw not merely a countryside in need of more and better roads, not only a residence and grounds capable of alteration and improvement, but a problem to be solved, a human and racial problem which had so far baffled all—whether individuals or governments—who had tried

to solve it. He saw the crofters in their primitive dwellings as he had no doubt seen them during his holiday visit thirty-three years earlier ; then they had been a picturesque object of interest, but now they were a people whom he felt it to be in his power to help. He knew that similar conditions had once existed on the mainland, but that they had disappeared before the on-march of modern civilization and enterprise. He had been told that the Lewis man was lazy, stubborn and suspicious ; he never believed it. He realized that the backwardness of the island and its miserable housing conditions arose from lack of opportunity, and this opportunity he would do his best to provide. Wherever he went he found the same story—things half attempted, nothing done. No clear-sighted and definite policy was visible anywhere. Fishing harbours had been asked for, but had been made too small and left derelict ; roads had been demanded, but had been made too narrow and never kept properly in repair.

Speaking of the more recent history of Lewis in an address given to the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh on November 4th, 1919, Leverhulme said : " Reports from Royal Commissions and Visiting Commissioners, thick as leaves in Vallombrosa, have been the dominating feature of Government policy in the Highlands and islands of Scotland. I will not weary you by detailing them, but the invariable rule seems to have been, where expenditure of public money was recommended by such commissions, for the Government either to ignore such reports or to cut down expenditure so penuriously as only to result in the waste of public money by not spending the full amount required." These words sum up the impression which his first and other early visits to the island made upon him. " Lewis and Harris," he said in the same address, " have too long been the Cinderella in the Government pantomime."

Lewis passed into Leverhulme's possession at Whitsuntide 1918. On the 29th of June he landed at Stornoway as " Proprietor " of the island for the first time, and received a warm and genuine ovation from a large crowd headed by the Provost and leading townsmen assembled on the quay, which was decorated for the occasion with bunting and evergreens, and an arch bearing the greeting " Welcome to your Island Home." A day or two later a formal address of welcome was presented at a meeting in the Masonic Hall, and he took advantage of the

occasion to make a general statement regarding his future intentions. "All I can do will be done," he said at the end of his speech. "We will work on business lines, and we will have nothing to do with philanthropy. We will be able to look each other in the face, and you will be able to say to me, 'We thank you for nothing but the opportunity you have given us.'"

It will be as well at this point to explain briefly what Leverhulme's schemes for the development of the island were. First and foremost was his plan to organize and extend the fishing industry. In the past, individual fishermen had landed their catches and sold them locally as best they could, but he considered that under this haphazard system only a fraction of the rich harvest of the Hebridean waters was being garnered. Then again the herring industry in Lewis, owing to the facility with which herring can be cured and packed in barrels, had prospered while the white fishing, with the growth of the East Coast ports, had languished, and he was anxious to revive it. He proposed to organize not only the fishing itself, but the distribution and sale of the catches, and it was originally for the purpose of solving this problem that the business of MacFisheries—to be referred to in the next chapter—was founded. MacFisheries, he hoped, would provide the Lewis fishermen with a steady and dependable market. To extend the fishing industry the harbour of Stornoway had to be improved in order to accommodate more and larger vessels, and this he took in hand. He also erected a factory to make ice required for the transport of fresh fish and one for dealing with fish offals, as well as a canning factory to cater more especially for the export trade. Realizing the labour which these developments would attract to Stornoway, he began the building of houses which, adapted in style to the local environment, were as great an advance upon preconceived ideas of working-class dwellings as the houses at Port Sunlight had been. He prepared a town-planning scheme which, had all gone well, would have made Stornoway one of the most beautiful and well-planned towns in Scotland, and he bought many freehold properties, his ownership of which was essential to the completion of his designs. In asking the Town Council to adopt his plans he stated that if the New Stornoway resulted in loss of revenue to the Council he would make good the deficit. He reconstructed and improved the gasworks, which had been for some

time unsatisfactory. He erected an electric light plant, and built a steam laundry. He entered upon a heavy programme of road-building in various parts of the island, the actual mileage completed amounting to sixteen. He carried out successful experiments in land reclamation and investigated the possibilities of osier growing, so that basket-making might be added to the industries of the island. He acquired a controlling interest in the local tweed industry, introduced many more hand looms, and encouraged the crofters, instead of wasting time spinning on the old-fashioned wheel, to use the mill spun yarn. In this way many more webs could be turned out by each crofter. Such, in the main, were the schemes upon which Leverhulme embarked, but the list I have given by no means exhausts the projects which took shape in his fertile mind.

At Lews Castle he entertained extensively every summer from 1918 to 1923, with the exception of 1921. During the first three of these seasons his sisters, the Misses Emily and Alice Lever, kept house for him, and during the last two his sister Mrs. Paul, her husband, Mr. Alex Paul, being indefatigable in organizing excursions for the guests. The visitors' book contained many interesting and well-known names, and in addition to his private friends Leverhulme invited many, both inside and outside the business of Lever Brothers, whose advice and co-operation he felt would be helpful in furthering his development schemes in the island. The warmth and extent of his hospitality in the Lewis, none who enjoyed it will forget, for not only was it offered at Lews Castle, from which, incidentally, grouse and snipe shooting as well as loch, river and deep-sea fishing could be obtained, but at four of the lodges on the island—Grimersta, with its unrivalled salmon fishing; Morsgail, whose deer forest overlooks Loch Langabhat; Uig, on the Atlantic Coast; and Soval, with its adjacent grouse moor and loch—the guests visiting each in turn. Constant hospitality was also given to the people of Stornoway, and when any of His Majesty's ships anchored in the harbour, fishing, shooting and stalking were provided for their officers, and dances were organized in the evening. On two such occasions Prince George was amongst the guests, his first visit being when he was training as a cadet on the *Téméraire*, and his second when serving as midshipman on the *Clan Mackay*.

During the opening months of Leverhulme's proprietorship all went well. With every day that passed he fell more deeply in love with the island, and became more enthralled with the intricate problems it contained, which, for him, provided the same thrills which his guests found in the stalking of a stag or the playing of a salmon. He was brimful of optimism, enthusiasm and determination. In spite of all the shaking of heads on the mainland, he was, in those early days, confident that his dreams would come true, and although he had never regarded his purchase of Lewis as an income-producing investment, he saw no reason why it should not, in the end, prove modestly successful in the financial sense also. To the average Lewis man he appeared in the light of a fairy godfather, sent by a kindly Providence to scatter plenty o'er what would soon be a smiling land. As far as the merchant community of Stornoway was concerned it was —as was perhaps to be expected—more cautious in forming an opinion. The people of Stornoway never doubted Leverhulme's good intentions, but they preferred to wait before committing themselves as to the wisdom of his schemes, although there were one or two who, from the beginning, trusted and supported him. It may be fairly said, however, that before the first year was over public opinion both in Stornoway and the hinterland was entirely in his favour. To illustrate his popularity I cannot do better than relate the story—one which he himself took great delight in telling—of an incident which happened one Sunday as he was leaving the United Free Church at Stornoway after morning service. An elder of the kirk, who in dress and appearance might have stepped out of the pages of Barrie's *The Little Minister*, came up to Leverhulme, and after bidding him good morning said, "Do ye no ken what the Auld Book says?" "Well, what does it say?" he replied. "It says," continued the elder, "'Woe unto ye when all men shall speak well o' ye'—and they're speaking well o' ye the noo." It is not only an amusing story but one which, in the light of events which were destined to follow, has a dramatic quality also.

Leverhulme's attachment to the eerie beauty of the Hebrides and his confidence in the ultimate success of his undertakings was to be further evidenced by his acquiring, about a year after he went to Lewis, the Island of Harris, South Harris being purchased from the Earl of Dunmore in May 1919 and North

Harris from Sir Samuel Scott in the following November. His ownership of Lewis and Harris, included in which were certain outlying islands such as the Shiant Islands and the Flannan Islands, made him one of the largest landowners, from the standpoint of acreage, in the United Kingdom.

His early days in Lewis were, as I have pointed out, very happy ones, but they were not to last for long. He encountered the first obstacle in his path in the late summer of 1918, when the Scottish Board of Agriculture declared its intention of taking over, under the terms of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act 1911, certain of the few remaining farms in the island to meet the demand for further small holdings or "crofts." Leverhulme, while he consented to some farms on the western side of the island being taken, was strongly opposed to the splitting up of the others, his chief reason being that he was looking to them to supply Stornoway with milk, the town having for some time been dependent on the mainland for its supplies, which were often two or three days old before they reached the consumers. Then again the population of Stornoway would become greater as his development work progressed, and he intended to take steps to increase the milk production on these farms in order to make the island no longer so largely dependent on outside supplies. The Board of Agriculture, however, supported by the Scottish Office, was insistent on its policy of scheduling the land for crofts, and referred to the assurances which had been given before the War that more land would be found for these small holdings. Then, with the opening months of 1919, came the return to their native heath of hundreds of Lewis men who had been serving in the Navy and Army, and the applications for crofts were more numerous than ever. The Scottish Office was reminded of the promises that had been made, and the demands with which it was inundated were backed by the Highland Land League and other political organizations which had for long been agitating and pressing the Government for a wide programme of land settlement all over the Highlands, and in the Western Highlands and Islands particularly. In the spring some of the applicants in the village of Tong, to the north of Stornoway, took the law into their own hands, seized one of the fields belonging to the local farm, and threatened to take the remainder. The die having been cast, lawlessness spread rapidly. At Coll,

a short distance away, about a hundred and fifty men and women from the village entered the grass fields surrounding the farmhouse and began to dig them up into allotments, each individual selecting a patch for himself without any regard to uniformity, while the farmer's sheep were driven from the land to make room for the crofters' sheep and cattle. At Gress Farm, farther north, inhabitants of the neighbouring villages of Back and Tolsta began trespassing, and one week-end the men of Back, hearing that the Tolsta men intended marking out the farm on the Monday, forestalled them by establishing themselves there on the Saturday. Hearing what had happened, Leverhulme at once decided to go to Gress and see the raiders himself. On his arrival a meeting was held in the roadway, and he explained to the men why he wished the farms to remain intact. He pointed out that he was in the island as their friend, and that he hoped his schemes would in time find employment for all who wanted it. In the meantime he offered to find employment in the vicinity not only for the forty odd who were immediately concerned, but for a total of one hundred men, by making a road which had been projected seventy years earlier but never even begun. He warned his hearers, however, that if the unlawful seizing of farm lands went on he would have seriously to consider stopping his development works. In the end he won the majority of the men over, and assurances were given that no more raidings would take place. In spite of these solemn declarations, however, raiding broke out again within a short space of time, and he was obliged to suspend a number of his undertakings. At the same time he appealed to the Secretary for Scotland, Mr. Robert Munro (Lord Alness), to enforce law and order. During the months that followed—in fact, until well into 1920—the position was discussed in correspondence and at interviews with the Scottish Secretary, but without any way out of the *impasse* being found. Had the surrender of the farm lands offered a final and permanent solution of the difficulties in Lewis and Harris, Leverhulme would willingly have consented to their being taken over, but the Scottish Office had to admit that if all the farms they wanted were divided up they would only provide 143 crofts, whereas the number of applicants was between one and two thousand. Before Leverhulme's advent there were only two alternatives open to the average Lewis man, crofting or enforced

emigration from his native land, and the Government Authorities were obsessed with one sole idea, the provision of further crofts. They admitted Leverhulme's good intentions and welcomed his investment of capital in the island, but they seem always to have viewed his development schemes as being a thing apart and unconnected with the problem of land hunger which had been so long with them. It was said that the crofting system was engrained in the Lewis man, and that the custom of centuries could not be altered, but Leverhulme maintained that the islanders clung to the system because the only alternative was emigration, and his sole aim and object was to offer to them, within their own borders, some other forms of employment. It was also said that he sought to "industrialize" a people who had no desire to be industrialized. It will be clear, however, from the brief outline of his schemes which has been given, that he had no thought or intention of establishing in the island "industries" as the term is understood in England; indeed, he himself pointed out that most of the industries of England would have been as exotic in the Hebrides as the growing of bananas or the cultivation of oil palms and coco-nuts.

While Leverhulme was abroad in South Africa in the spring of 1920, the Scottish Secretary, Mr. Munro, stated at an interview with Leverhulme's representatives that the Scottish Office had no power to evict the raiders; that the remedy lay with the proprietor himself, who could institute proceedings against them and no doubt obtain their conviction, but he added the significant observation that should the Sheriff send any of the raiders to prison, he, as Secretary for Scotland, had the power to recommend to the Crown that they should be released. When, after his return, Leverhulme appealed to the local police authorities to issue summonses against the raiders, they referred the matter to their superiors on the mainland, who declined to act, leaving it to the proprietor to set the wheels of the law in motion. Leverhulme said he would only prosecute the raiders if he had the full support of the majority of the law-abiding inhabitants, and fortified by clear proofs of this support he did eventually obtain interdicts against the principal transgressors, but with this legal proof of the justice of his case he was content. Had he gone farther it would have been necessary to apply for the

enforcement of the order of the Court, as disobedience seemed certain. This meant imprisonment, with the possible result already mentioned, and he considered that it would have reduced to a farce his attempt to enforce the law. His only judicious and reasonable course of action, therefore, was the complete closing down of his developments, and this course he took. This action led to further parleys with the Scottish Office, and ended in Mr. Munro agreeing not to take over any farms for a period of ten years, by the end of which time it would be seen whether Leverhulme's schemes were successful. In January 1921 Leverhulme again resumed his operations, but unfortunately, very soon afterwards, the general industrial depression which followed the boom in trade after the War imposed upon him the imperative necessity of curtailing, and in some instances of suspending, the works he had in hand. A situation had arisen beyond the control of any of the parties to the dispute, but nevertheless the Scottish Office almost at once declared the ten-year agreement to be at an end, and announced its intention of dividing up the farms. "It would have been just as mad for me to have said I would resume at that moment," said Leverhulme in describing these events later, "as it would be for any captain of any ship on the ocean, on encountering fog, to persist in going full speed ahead. Just as surely as fogs lift and mists disappear, so would such economic conditions have passed away; but I was given no opportunity for this to occur."

"This rather indecent haste for withdrawal"—the phrase was his own—placed Leverhulme in the position of not being able to resume operations at all, and these conditions continued until 1923, when he came to the conclusion that it was impossible for him to remain in the Lewis any longer. But no event in the history of his association with the island was to be more characteristic of his mentality and nature than the manner of his withdrawal. On September 3rd, 1923, he invited to a meeting in Stornoway the members of the Stornoway Town Council, the Lewis District Committee, and the Parish Council of Stornoway, and, after referring to the motives which had brought him to the island, his hopes and his disappointments, his efforts on behalf of the inhabitants, and their frustration by the raiders and by the attitude and actions of the Scottish Office, he explained

to his audience that he could no longer remain in Lewis. "I am like Othello," he said, "with my occupation gone, and I could only be like the ghost of Hamlet's father, haunting the place as a shadow." He then offered as a free gift to the people of Stornoway all his land within a seven-mile radius of the Stornoway Post Office, including the Castle and its grounds and woods. The Castle, he suggested, should become the Town Hall and the official residence of the Provost, replacing the former Town Hall, which had been destroyed by fire some years earlier. The "policies," including a fine road he had made along the harbour front through the Castle Woods to the mouth of the River Creed, he offered as a public park, and suggested that it should be called "Lady Lever Park" in memory of his wife. To enable the Castle and grounds to be kept up he proposed, he said, to transfer to local trustees the Stornoway Gasworks and other undertakings in the town. The remainder of Lewis he offered as a gift to the inhabitants, to be administered by trustees appointed in part by the Lewis District Committee and in part by the Parliamentary voters, but each crofter was given the opportunity of becoming the proprietor of his own croft. He asked for an answer by October 6th. It was the general expectation that both offers would be accepted, for surely, it was thought, those who had for so long championed the cause of the crofter in his desire for land would see to it that this unique opportunity for putting into practice the principle of public ownership was seized. To most people's surprise, however, while the Town Council of Stornoway readily accepted the offer made to them, the Lewis District Committee, by 6 votes to 3, declined Leverhulme's offer, although a few crofters became proprietors of their own crofts. But the reason for the rejection is not difficult to understand, for it followed the lines of Mr. Micawber's immortal argument, "Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery." The crofters discovered that for every 10s. received in rent they would have to pay 10s. 6d. in rates, and in some districts even as much as 54s. in the pound. They appealed to the Scottish Office for financial assistance, but in vain, and the majority came to the conclusion that it was better for the people to remain as they were, leaving

the landlord to receive the 10s. as rent and pay the 10s. 6d. or more as rates.

After the final abandonment of his schemes in Lewis, Leverhulme gave his undivided attention to the prosecution of his plans in Harris, where the inhabitants had shown a keener desire to give him active support, and where he had already embarked upon undertakings of the same general character as those in Lewis. At Obbe, in the south of the island, he had carried out improvements to the harbour which had long been needed, and soon after his purchase of Harris the township had been renamed Leverburgh, the change being made on the initiative and at the request of the inhabitants themselves, who desired in this way to show their appreciation of his work on their behalf. At Leverburgh he found a natural harbour which he considered to be unrivalled in the Western Isles, and he set to work to develop it and improve its approaches with a view to establishing an important fishing port. He erected, alongside the quay, buildings required for the curing and packing of herrings, as well as kippering houses, and arranged for the MacLine Drifters and Trawlers, Ltd.—a subsidiary of MacFisheries—to operate from Leverburgh during the herring seasons. To meet the demand for more houses he offered sites at the nominal annual ground rent of one shilling each, and assisted the applicants with a grant to cover the cost of certain building materials, which, added to the Government allowances, enabled them to build their own homes. He also laid out a recreation ground and built a public hall—which he named The Hulme Hall—where meetings could be held and dances and entertainments be given. His other undertakings in Harris included the erection of a tweed mill for the making of handwoven tweeds and the construction of many miles of roads which had long been an urgent necessity. One of these roads, three and a half miles in length, he built almost entirely at his own expense, while of another road of five and a half miles—from Leverburgh to Finsbay—half the cost was borne by Leverhulme and half by the Ministry of Transport. In the case of two other roads, each five miles in length, half the cost was defrayed by Leverhulme and half by the Unemployment Grants Committee.

In Harris, where the same crofting system exists as in Lewis, the spasmodic raiding of farms occurred soon after the first

outbreaks in Lewis, but they were soon nipped in the bud by the people themselves. The Harris man, by temperament more adaptable to new conditions and ideas than the Lewis man, was determined that the mistakes made in Lewis should not be repeated in Harris, and the crofters soon made it only too plain to the raiders that public opinion was against them, and that raiding must cease. In the case of Harris, in the absence of lawlessness and with the mass of parliamentary voters so unmistakably at his back, Leverhulme had little difficulty in arranging with the Scottish Office that his policy and developments in the island should be given a ten years' trial before any of the farm lands were broken up.

With the transfer of his energies and affections from Lewis to Harris, and of his island home from Lews Castle to Borve Lodge, Leverhulme's optimism and determination were not merely restored—they were intensified. With redoubled ardour he threw himself into the task of accomplishing in Harris what, through force of circumstances, he had failed to achieve in Lewis. Whether his dreams in Harris would in the end have been realized and all his schemes there have come to fruition, it is impossible to say. The end, when it so suddenly came, found him with his optimism undimmed, his faith unshaken, and his determination to carry out his undertakings unrelaxed ; and one is grateful that, amid these surroundings which he had grown to love so well, in tramping over the moors and rowing over the lochs, in planning the building of roads, in watching the growth of Leverburgh and in making his garden at Borve, he was able to enjoy, if only for a short time, some of the happiest hours of his life.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE ACQUISITION OF THE NIGER COMPANY AND OTHER POST-WAR EXPANSIONS

IN many respects the year 1917 was the most significant in the latter part of Leverhulme's life, for it was then that circumstances led him to Lewis, where his desire to bring prosperity to the island resulted in the founding of MacFisheries, Ltd., which soon grew into an organization far larger than his original conception of it. In fact, one thing led to another and it seemed as if, having found through these undertakings a good reason for devoting less of his time to Lever Brothers, he would soon discover that his new responsibilities made even more exacting claims upon him than his original business. This might, indeed, have been the case had it not been that Lever Brothers itself increased enormously in size in the years immediately following the War. How great this growth was may be gathered from the fact that the issued share capital of the Company, which in 1917 stood at £15,202,799, had reached in 1924 the huge total of £56,627,546, which made it the largest commercial undertaking of its kind in the world. This great increase was accounted for very largely by the number of companies which were acquired during the period and which included, as far as the British Soap and Candle Trade was concerned, the following important firms :

Messrs. Joseph Crosfield & Sons, Ltd. ; The Erasmic Co., Ltd. ; William Gossage & Sons, Ltd. ; Joseph Watson & Sons, Ltd. ; John Knight, Ltd. ; The International Icilma Trading Co., Ltd. ; and Price's Patent Candle Co., Ltd.[1]

But in addition to the capital required for the acquisition of these companies, there was the natural expansion of the existing associated concerns at home and abroad as well as the growth of the parent company to be taken into account. There were considerable developments on the Continent and in

[1] In 1922 the candle-making side of Messrs. Price's business was merged with the candle business of certain British oil interests. The soap-manufacturing side of Messrs. Price's business was retained by Lever Brothers.

other parts of the world after the War, soap works being established in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Austria, India, China and New Zealand, while the factory at Mannheim, which had been enlarged by the Germans, was re-acquired. The growth of the American company, both during and after the War, was on an unprecedented scale, and, from being a small concern of little account, it grew to be about the third largest soap manufacturing company in the States. On two occasions, when in America, Leverhulme purchased an important site on the Hudson River opposite New York, with a view to possible developments in the future, and the firm's American interests were further extended through the purchase of a controlling interest in the Philippine Refining Corporation. At home there was the new margarine enterprise at Bromborough, with its adjoining refineries for edible oils, two undertakings which added still further to the amount of capital which was required.

A brief reference may be made at this point to another post-war development of Lever Brothers—whaling. After the discovery of the hydrogenation process, whereby crude whale oil could be converted into a valuable raw material for the soap-maker and edible-oil refiner, the demand for whale oil grew rapidly. Lever Brothers had already entered the whaling business in a small way through an associated company operating from Durban, but in 1919 Leverhulme's interest in the industry was greatly increased through the purchase of the Southern Whaling and Sealing Co., Ltd., which owned a whaling station at Prince Olaf Harbour in South Georgia. Its already important fleet was soon enlarged and the operations of the Company extended by sending expeditions, not only to South Georgia, but farther into the Antarctic, to the South Shetlands. It was about this time that the science of whaling was revolutionized by the introduction of the "floating factory," a vessel much larger than the ordinary whale-catcher and so arranged that whales could be hauled on board and their oil extracted, thus avoiding the necessity of frequent returns to shore. With these developments in the whaling industry, which made it possible to operate in waters where no land station was available, Lever Brothers kept well abreast. The firm also bought, in 1922, a small whaling station at Bunaveneader in the Island of Harris, which had been built some years earlier by a Norwegian company. A fully

equipped laboratory was installed there and a research chemist was appointed to supervise the whaling operations and scientific work, so that the station might serve as an experimental centre for the firm's larger interests in the Antarctic. Whaling may, therefore, be included amongst the industries which Leverhulme established in, or at any rate restored to, the Island of Harris.

The most important event in the post-war history of Lever Brothers was, however, their purchase in 1920 of the Ordinary shares of the Niger Company, Ltd. It will be recalled that Lever Brothers had already gained a foothold in the West African trade through Messrs. W. B. MacIver & Co., an old-established firm of African merchants with a considerable trade in Nigeria and the Cameroons. The firm's interest in West Africa had been further extended by the purchase of the important Manchester house of John Walkden & Co., Ltd., as well as of Messrs. R. & W. King in the Ivory Coast and Cameroons, one of the oldest companies in Africa; P. Ratcliffe & Co. in Sierra Leone; and the Cavalla River Company in Liberia. Leverhulme always held that he would not have been wise, in view of his extensive manufacturing interests, to have allowed himself to be at the mercy of the markets for his supplies of raw materials, and it was in order to carry out this policy in a thorough and effective manner that the Niger Company was acquired.

The position of the Niger Company in West Africa is unique, for while it is now a trading company conducted on the same lines as other African companies, it was originally incorporated by Royal Charter, and until 1900 it was responsible for the administration of Nigeria. To-day on the Niger and Benue Rivers it is still spoken of as "The Company." In addition to its own trading stations throughout Nigeria, its self-contained headquarters at Burutu, at one of the mouths of the Niger, and its extensive fleet of stern-wheelers and other river craft, the Company owned several associated companies whose interests were not confined to Nigeria alone, but were spread over the Gold Coast, Senegal, French Guinea, the Sudan and the Seychelles Islands, while through another subsidiary concern, Messrs. De Bruyn, Ltd., it was interested in the exploitation of shea-nut butter—a product of West Africa—in Great Britain and on the Continent. The Niger Company's position was further strengthened by its being entitled, under the terms of the agreement made with the

British Government when the Charter was surrendered, to half the mineral royalties from an area of over a hundred million acres, including the tin deposits of the Bauchi Plateau. It will be readily seen, therefore, that, by acquiring the Niger Company, Leverhulme was able to convert Lever Brothers' foothold in West Africa into an entrenchment.

The Niger Company was acquired by Lever Brothers in 1920, the price offered for its 1,250,000 Ordinary shares of £1 each being £6 10s. per share. Practically every shareholder accepted the offer, and the capital outlay involved was in the neighbourhood of £8,000,000. The purchase price was not payable, however, until the 1st of July, and, in the meantime, the administration of the Company remained in the hands of the existing management. Now early in the year 1920 the boom in trade which had followed the War, and of which West Africa had had an ample share, came to an abrupt end. At the beginning of the year Leverhulme, realizing that the world's hunger for raw materials had been appreciably satisfied, had foreseen the likelihood of a fall in prices and had instructed his own Company, Lever Brothers, to reduce their stocks to a minimum. In April, however, the Government adopted a policy of deflation, and in May the fall in prices, which might have been steady and manageable, became more rapid, and in the following November assumed the character of an avalanche, palm oil, for example, falling from its former price of £94 per ton to £27 10s. But, during the first six months of the year the management of the Niger Company had adopted the opposite policy to that of Leverhulme and had added to their stocks of raw materials by heavy purchases on the open market, believing that, by so doing, they would "support" the market and help to stem the tide of falling prices. The result was that when Leverhulme, through Lever Brothers, assumed control of the Niger Company in July, he was faced with the gravest business problem which had ever confronted him, for not only had the Company been bought at a high price on the crest of a wave of prosperity, but he also found on his hands many thousands of tons of raw materials on a falling market, while on top of these financial difficulties came the urgently necessary task of re-organizing from top to bottom the personnel and machinery of the Company, both in Africa and at home. Granted the soundness of the policy that a company should be interested in the

production of its own raw materials, there can be no doubt as to the wisdom of acquiring the Niger Company, although the price paid was found, in the light of later events, to have been excessive. During the remaining years of Leverhulme's life the affairs of the Niger Company were a constant source of anxiety, and although he knew that the purchase would ultimately justify itself, he realized that it would require great patience, incessant vigilance and hard work. To his friends and colleagues the greatest regret was that, at seventy years of age, he should have had to shoulder, in addition to his many other responsibilities, the formidable burden which the affairs of the Niger Company placed upon him.

The capital required in connection with the purchase of the Ordinary shares of the Niger Company meant the issue of further Preference shares by Lever Brothers ; but before this took place Leverhulme considered it advisable to consolidate and simplify the various classes of shares which already existed. To effect the change it was necessary to increase the rate of dividend on the original 5 per cent. Preference shares, and these shares accordingly became 7 per cent. Preference shares. The consent of the holders of these shares could no doubt have been obtained without such a large increase in their rate of dividend, but Leverhulme purposely made the rate a little higher than it need have been because he had felt for some time that he would like to do something for the investors who had shown their confidence in him in the early days of the business. "I have been able to do something for the employees through Co-partnership," he said, "and I would like to make some acknowledgment to the old original shareholders."

It was about this time, the summer of 1920, that the only strike in the history of Port Sunlight took place ; by this I mean the only strike confined to Port Sunlight itself as distinct from "sympathetic strikes," during which employees in various skilled trades had left their work in support of workers in the same trades elsewhere. Port Sunlight's one self-contained strike arose out of a quarrel between two trade unions. During and after the War the great majority of the workers in the factory and also of the clerical staff had joined a union called the Warehouse and General Workers' Union. Before the strike, however, many of the office staff had been transferring their allegiance to a new

union, the Liverpool Shipping Clerks' Guild, which was confined entirely to clerks. The General Workers' Union, seeing many of their members drifting from them, protested and claimed that the firm should recognize them (the General Workers' Union) as the only negotiating authority on behalf of the employees concerned, and eventually called out on strike first their clerical and then their factory members, timing the strike in the office to coincide with the capital rearrangement to which I have just referred, which they knew would entail a heavy volume of work, involving as it did the dispatch of thousands of forms and circulars as well as the compilation of the necessary statistical records. The position was a critical one, but over the week-end directors and managers, their wives and sons and daughters, as well as other voluntary helpers, set to work and, aided by the members of the staff who had not gone out on strike, finished the work within the time required. To Leverhulme, who had always been proud of Port Sunlight's freedom from strikes, the occurrence was naturally a matter of great regret, although the strike was one of which the firm was the victim rather than the cause. When the situation arose he saw that the issue was eoncerned with points of principle on which there could be no compromise, and he made it clear that he would not support the one union against the other, and that the question of which union an employee should belong to was the private concern of the man or woman concerned. After lasting for twenty-one days the strike ended.

I must now refer briefly to some of the varied undertakings, distinct from the business of Lever Brothers, which engaged Leverhulme's attention during the period covered by this chapter. The principal one was "MacFisheries," an enterprise which, as we have seen, originated with his desire to create an organization which would provide for the fishing industry in Lewis an assured market for its products. The operations of MacFisheries began with the purchase of a number of retail fish shops, the underlying idea being to supply the public with a service of fresh fish direct "from sea to slab." The first of these shops was acquired in February 1919; by the following September a hundred shops had been either purchased or opened, and by the end of 1921 three hundred and sixty branches of MacFisheries had been established. Owing to the troubles in Lewis the original object of MacFisheries was never fulfilled, but, in any case, the island

fisheries could never have supplied the whole of the company's needs, for so enthusiastic did Leverhulme become over the many problems which the development of MacFisheries presented, that the business soon grew to a size and assumed a character far different from the simple conception from which it had started. Several companies owning groups of wholesale and retail fish, poultry and game shops were acquired, as well as one or two important steam trawling concerns, such as Bloomfields, Ltd.; in fact, the number of companies associated with MacFisheries reached the total of forty-eight and ranged from the Aberdeen Steam Trawling Company in the North of Scotland to the Helford Oysterage in the Duchy of Cornwall.

The mention of MacFisheries and its associated companies does not, however, exhaust the list of undertakings with which Leverhulme became connected. The canned goods trade, for instance, came within the orbit of his activities, one of the firms in which he acquired an interest being Messrs. Angus Watson & Co., Ltd., of Newcastle-on-Tyne, whose chairman, Mr. Angus Watson, had many years earlier been associated with Lever Brothers in America. He also secured a controlling interest in the Watford Manufacturing Company—now known as Planters' Products, Ltd.—makers of chocolate, cocoa and other food products.

With the multiplication of Leverhulme's commercial interests after the War his business headquarters were transferred from Port Sunlight to London, and for a while his personal office was at Dewar House in the Haymarket and then at 33, St. James's Square. But after Lever Brothers' purchase of the Niger Company it became clear that a concern with such world-wide ramifications could only be satisfactorily administered from London, and so in 1921 Leverhulme decided upon the purchase of de Keyser's Hotel on the Thames Embankment at Blackfriars, which was then for sale. The acquisition of this building, which was named Lever House, had an interesting sequel. The hotel was originally founded by Sir Polydore de Keyser, a native of Termonde in Belgium, who became a naturalized British subject and was Lord Mayor of London from 1887 to 1888. With the purchase of the building there came into Lever Brothers' possession a marble bust of Sir Polydore and a portrait of him in his robes of office. Leverhulme inquired whether there were any immediate descendants of Sir Polydore

to whom he could present the bust and portrait. Being unable to trace any, he offered them to the Municipality of Termonde, who readily accepted these records of one of their most distinguished citizens for the Hôtel de Ville, which was being rebuilt after the heavy damage which it had suffered during the German invasion of Belgium. In recognition of the gift the freedom of the town was conferred upon Leverhulme at a meeting of the Municipality on April 16th, 1921. A year later, when he was staying in Brussels, he visited Termonde and was received by the Burgomaster and Corporation at the Hôtel de Ville. A luncheon was afterwards given in his honour.

The survey in this chapter of Leverhulme's post-war enterprises may be appropriately concluded by a reference to the Moor Park Estate in Hertfordshire, which he purchased from the late Lord Ebury in November 1919. The estate, a little under 3,000 acres in extent, is about seventeen miles from London, and its history is a very interesting one. In the fifteenth century "The Manor of the Moor," as it was then called, formed part of the possessions of St. Albans Abbey, but at a later date it became the property of the Crown, until the accession of Henry VII, who granted it to John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who had led the van of his army at the Battle of Bosworth Field. Afterwards it was in the possession of Cardinal Wolsey, and legend has it that Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn often met there during their courtship. Various owners followed, and in 1670 it was sold to the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, natural son of Charles II, who retired there after his banishment from Court on account of his implication in the Rye House plot. Tradition says that after his execution, which followed upon the failure of his rebellion and his defeat at Sedgemoor, the Duchess of Monmouth, his wife, gave orders that the heads of all the oaks in the park should be cut off, so that the trees might never be used for the building of ships for the King's navy. Fifty years later the property was sold to Benjamin Hoskin Styles, a merchant who had made a large fortune in the "South Sea Bubble," and he it was who, in rebuilding the original mansion, erected the striking building designed by the celebrated Italian architect, Giacomo Leoni, which is now the greatest adornment of Moor Park. In 1828 the estate was acquired by the first Marquess of Westminster, and on the death of his widow it passed into the possession of

his youngest son, who was afterwards created Lord Ebury, and it was from his eldest son, the second Lord Ebury, that Leverhulme purchased it.

The days when country mansions on the scale of Moor Park can be used as private residences are fast passing, and Leverhulme bought Moor Park, not with a view to living there himself, but because he saw the future possibilities which awaited the development of an estate near London with such ideal surroundings, and because it gave him, at the same time, an opportunity of preserving one of the finest examples of classical domestic architecture in the country. To develop the estate he formed a company called Moor Park, Ltd., the guaranteed debentures of which were offered to the public. Three golf courses were laid out in the park and the mansion and its grounds were turned into a country club.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

MY father addressed the House of Lords for the first time on June 4th, 1918, when he moved the rejection of a Bill for a Decimal System of Coinage introduced by Lord Southwark. In principle, he was in favour of decimal coinage, but opposed to this particular Bill, because it retained the sovereign as the standard unit and worked downwards, dividing the pound sterling into 1,000 mils, and replacing the penny by a 5-mil piece, worth 20 per cent. more than the penny, whereas he wished to retain the penny, or rather the halfpenny—equivalent to the American cent—as the standard unit and work upwards, calling 100 halfpennies a "Royal," to correspond with the dollar, five "Royals" making a gold "Guinea." The two systems reflect the difference between the training and mentality of the banker—the Southwark Bill was endorsed by the Institute of Bankers—and the experience and outlook which Leverhulme derived from his early commercial training and the particular problems of his own business. The banker and financier think in multiples of pounds; Leverhulme's business, on the other hand, depended upon the marketing of proprietary articles, where the variation of a halfpenny in the price frequently makes all the difference between a profit and a loss. The banker's customer is the depositor who deals in pounds; Leverhulme's ultimate customer was the average housewife, in whose household budget the penny is the unit of thought. The supporters of the "mil" basis argued that Britain's pre-eminence in international finance depended upon the universal recognition and prestige of the sovereign, while Leverhulme contended that her position as the world's financial centre was due to "our reputation for honesty and integrity . . . to confidence in London as a free market for gold, to our international shipping facilities and trade and to our finance and credit," rather than the magic of any particular coin of the realm. "Convenience in money is essential," he urged. The penny, he claimed, had stood the test of

twelve centuries, whereas "the parvenu sovereign"—to quote his own piquant phrase—had only been in use since 1817. "Most of the leading nations," he said, "have based their decimal systems on the British penny divided into parts to suit their requirements. The American dollar, for instance, is based on our halfpenny; the Latin franc on tenpence. . . . We do not want to make an embalmed mummy of the sovereign; we want to unite English-speaking people." The Government did not give its official support to the Bill, but expressed its willingness, if necessary, to appoint a Joint Committee of both Houses to consider the whole question.

In the following November Leverhulme introduced a Bill embodying his own proposals for a Decimal Coinage on a halfpenny basis. It was formally read a first time, but, at the request of the Government, was not proceeded with further, and at the end of the year a Royal Commission—of which Leverhulme became a member—was appointed to examine the whole problem of decimal coinage. The majority report of this Commission was against the introduction of a decimal system, but this finding was strongly contested in a minority report signed by Lord Southwark, Mr. Harold Cox and others, while Leverhulme's signature appeared at the foot of a second minority report advocating the halfpenny basis as against the retention of the sovereign.

Leverhulme's second speech in the Lords was delivered on February 19th, 1919, in the course of a debate on "Industrial Unrest" initiated by Lord Buckmaster. Previous speakers had, on the whole, taken a somewhat gloomy view of the industrial situation, and Leverhulme's speech, with its characteristic note of optimism and confidence, completely changed the atmosphere of the debate, for he began by assuring his hearers that they had no need to take a pessimistic view of industrial unrest. "Believe me," he said, "it is the healthiest sign in the country at the present time." He made a distinction, however, between this healthy type of unrest, due to Labour's reasonable and just aspirations for a larger share of the amenities and good things of life, and another kind of unrest—definitely unhealthy—arising from misunderstanding and suspicion, carefully fostered and encouraged, and the lack of opportunities for learning the basic facts of industry. But the main argument and trend of the speech can only be fully appreciated if some of its most striking passages are quoted:—

"There is no unrest of the Bolshevist order. Our soldiers have returned, and I do not think you will find a single Bolshevist among them.

"On the subject of strikes, let us consider what a strike is. There is no commodity bought and sold between any two individuals without a small strike taking place.

"I cannot see how we could with advantage attempt to deprive a body of men of the right to use this means, common to all of us, in connection with the only article that they have to sell, namely, their labour. And it would seem to me, therefore, that we must bear patiently with this state of affairs at the present time.

"Do you not think we have been rather teaching the lesson that a scarcity of labour has brought advantages, through the operation of strikes, that a plentiful supply of labour has not brought, and have we not rather taught that by means of strikes wages have been advanced, and that where no strike has taken place salaries have not been advanced? I think it is deplorable that it should be so, but that is the position. . . . I venture to say that at the present time there is a deep-rooted suspicion between employers and employed which ought not to exist. I think it arises entirely from misunderstanding.

"The workman is not to be kept running as a machine by satisfying his wants. Every fresh aspiration of the workman that we grant to-day will lift him higher and give him new aspirations to-morrow, and so we shall always have what we call labour unrest if we are to be a healthy community.

"Some reference has been made in the course of the debate to the question of Co-partnership. Perhaps I can speak more freely on this subject as I am a convinced believer in the principle of Co-partnership, and have put it into operation, as far as my limited powers go, possibly to as great an extent as anyone. But let me point out its weakness. . . . The drawback I invariably hear against Co-partnership from the workmen themselves is that it does not give them enough; that the dividends they receive as co-partners are not sufficiently high to be of interest to them. That is the only complaint I have ever heard against it. They expect the profits to be higher than they really are, or than they ever can be. They have an inflated idea, and that is one of the causes of the unhealthy unrest.

"If the arrangement had been made with the working people of this country at the outbreak of war that, instead of having increased wages, they should have all the excess profits their employers made, they would have made a very poor bargain. The excess profits remaining in the hands of the employers, if you calculate them, would not have given the workman 4s. per head per week.

"The rise in the wages of the worker has been five times more than the amount of the increase in the employers' profits.

"These are facts the workman is never told. I have mentioned them at meetings of work-people, and they have expressed surprise. I have asked them to work them out for themselves, and they have been unable to challenge their accuracy. While the War has been going on,

wages have, rightly and properly, advanced by over 100 per cent., but if, instead of that 100 per cent. increase, labour had received the whole of the profits made in all the industries of the country, the rise in wages would not have been 30s. a week but well under £1 a week. These are facts that I want our workers to understand. If we are to prevent strikes it is not for us to say to the worker that he shall not have the same right as other citizens to demand as high a price as the market can give for his labour, but it is our duty to see that the worker is properly acquainted with the conditions under which he works and the effect upon industry of every rise of wages.

"Why should we not recognize that it is a right and proper human aspiration for a workman to desire an increase in wages? Those who, like myself, have been born and bred in a Lancashire manufacturing town, have listened, between five and half-past in the morning, whilst lying in bed, to the patter of the clogs of people going down the street on the way to the mills, and have heard the same patter between five and six o'clock in the evening when the work-people have come back. Some of you, like myself, may remember the condition of the workers in the late 'fifties, when, amongst male operatives, you could only see two patterns of legs—the knock-kneed and the bow-legged. That was the result of immature youths being forced to work long and laborious hours in the vitiated atmosphere of mills and foundries. Their poor feeble legs either bent inwards or outwards. When there was a reduction in the long hours, we were told that the industries of the country would be ruined. A member of your Lordships' House, the late Lord Shaftesbury, brought forward in 'another place' the question of the age at which child labour should enter mills, and it was raised. Instead of our industries being ruined they were more prosperous than ever, as we all know.

"We have got, in this country, to produce so cheaply that our articles are sought all over the world, and if they are not sought all over the world, and if we have not the overseas trade, then we have no means of exchanging commodities for the raw materials that we require and the food that we cannot grow within the limited area of this country.

"Let us sit down and see how it can be done. We shall at once come to this position, that our workers are obsessed with the idea that their best interest is in limited production. They have thought that excessive production will mean warehouses full, mills and factories shut down, and unemployment stalking our streets. They are obsessed with that idea. They do not know what it means if the articles in the warehouses are cheap. One celebrated writer, a very thoughtful writer, says that if we make only mouse-traps cheaper than anybody else can make them, the whole world will beat a track to our door. They do not realize it. They are merely thinking of bulk; they do not think of price. When they work a machine, they do not think that the machine is costing more in interest, repairs and renewals than the man who attends to the machine is costing in wages. They are not thinking of these things; they have not been taught to think of them.

"Let us sit down with them and let us say: 'The position is this.

Here are the figures of production per worker in this country and the production per worker in the United States. In the United States there is no limitation of output. The trade unions there do not object to a man's output being as great as ever he can make it.'

"The British workman is second to none in the whole world, and he will be welcomed there at double the British rate of pay. But surely you must inquire the reason. You must want to know why it is that you are worth one rate of pay here in England and double the rate if you land in America. You will find out if you search the figures, for you will see that the output per man in the United States is considerably more than three times what it is in this country. At any rate, if I say from two to three times, I am speaking conservatively.

"Cannot we put our heads together and say to our workmen: 'You want more wages and shorter hours; then let us see if we cannot work so that you can have both. The key to the position is that if we shorten hours and increase wages we must reduce the cost of production. If we do not reduce it, then you, as the workers, will find, however much your wages have gone up, that their purchasing power is reduced.'

"I believe that if we admit that the British workman is as fine a type as any there is in the world, and more amenable to argument, logic and proof than any other section of the community, and we then set our minds to try if we cannot satisfy his natural and right ambition for an improved social position, admitting that there are, after all, only two classes in this country—those who do their duty and those who fail to do it—and that we can all join together in endeavouring to do our duty to each other, discussing as partners what road we shall take, then I believe that on those lines, and working in that way, we shall find that the bogy of strikes will be shorn of all its terrors. We shall then find that a strike will be merely a prelude to consideration of the situation; and that quickly and readily we shall not only raise ourselves as a producing nation, so that our goods are more welcome in every country of the world than they were before the War, but that here in England the price of commodities will come down, and that, in this process, we shall have taken the only course that will enable us to discharge our heavy load of debt."

It is rarely that the House of Lords is demonstrative in its reception of a speech, but when Leverhulme sat down, there was a pronounced burst of cheering which lasted quite an appreciable time. "In all the forty years I have sat in the House of Lords," Lord Sandhurst wrote a few days later in a letter of congratulation, "I can hardly recall an occasion on which a speaker received a more cordial or genuine ovation." Lord Curzon, who had personally urged him to take part in the debate, also offered his congratulations. "It is a matter of common consent," he wrote, "that you delivered one of the finest speeches that has been heard for years." In another letter, written on January 18th, 1921, asking him to second the address in reply to the King's Speech

at the opening of Parliament—a duty which he was unfortunately unable to undertake—Lord Curzon again referred to the impression which Leverhulme had made upon the House. The letter was as follows :—

". . . Can I persuade you to second the Address in reply to the King's Speech on that occasion (February 15th) ? Ever since we first met on the Indian Ocean I have admired your public career and work, and have listened with interest to your liberal-minded and statesmanlike views. On the few occasions when you have addressed the Lords you have greatly impressed that critical Assembly ; and I feel sure that your assumption of the task which I propose will be as welcome to them as it will be agreeable to myself."

During the continuance in office of the Coalition Ministry, Leverhulme sat on the Government benches, and afterwards with the Liberals. Throughout his political life he was a warm admirer and supporter of Mr. Lloyd George and corresponded with him more freely than with any other Cabinet Minister or politician of note. The amazing energy and personal forcefulness of Mr. Lloyd George, his determination and ability to " get things done " and his power to inspire others, which meant so much to the country during the War, were qualities which made a natural appeal to Leverhulme's temperament. That Mr. Lloyd George valued this long friendship and support was shown in his choice of Leverhulme as chairman of the great meeting of the National Liberal Party which he addressed at the Central Hall, Westminster, on January 19th, 1922, a gathering which virtually marked the emergence of National Liberalism as a distinct political force. But although he gave prominent support to Coalition, and later to National Liberalism, Leverhulme deeply regretted the cleavage in the Liberal forces and the personal issues involved. To illustrate his views I cannot do better than quote from the following letter, which he wrote in November 1917 to the secretary of the Women's Social and Political Union withdrawing his support from the organization on account of its disturbance of a meeting addressed by Mr. Asquith in Liverpool.

". . . I believe the very worst policy we have adopted through the War has been our frenzied desire to ' scrap ' any or all of our public men from time to time. There is no one who has served the country better than Mr. Asquith did at the beginning of this War, and I am confident that his services will be required by the nation at a later date. I can say this with the fullest loyalty and devotion to the present Prime

Minister, than whom we could not possibly have, in my opinion, a better man. . . . The two are so entirely distinct that naturally they will not think alike on every subject, and it is a matter for congratulation that the nation has these two men, each with strong points and each a strong man."

Leverhulme's Liberalism was always more than a party label; it was a deeply ingrained habit of thought. What his political future would have been, had he lived longer, is a natural speculation, especially as several prominent leaders of industry have, since his death, left the ranks of the Liberal Party. I feel convinced, myself, that he would have remained a Liberal. Warm as was his sympathy with the aspirations of Labour, he was clearly too staunch a believer in individualism and private enterprise and too strong an opponent of State control in industry to be able to associate himself with even the mildest form of official Socialism, and he would, on the other hand, as an inveterate Free Trader and for other reasons, have found himself ill at ease within the Conservative fold.

On November 11th, 1922, Leverhulme was created a Viscount, his name being amongst those submitted to the King by the Prime Minister on the resignation of the Coalition Ministry, and he took his seat in the House of Lords, under his new rank, a few days later, his introducers being Viscount Haldane and Viscount Devonport. In choosing a territorial designation for his Viscounty he decided to associate it with Lewis and Harris, which, together with some of the smaller adjacent islands, are collectively known as the Western Isles. When his adoption of the territorial distinction of " of the Western Isles " was made known, however, it evoked strong protests from several Gaelic societies in the Highlands, and while the controversy lasted, the Press was not short of pithy and provocative " copy." Into the arguments for and against an Englishman associating his title with a locality in Scotland, or a Scotsman linking his name with a place in England, I shall not attempt to enter, except to observe that, if arduous, albeit frustrated, efforts to promote the welfare of the district in question confer any qualifications in the matter, they seem in this case to have been abundantly earned. As far as Lewis and Harris were concerned, and they were, after all, the places most affected, it is interesting to recall that, while the controversy was at its height, an illuminated address was presented to Leverhulme, signed by representatives of all the public bodies in the island, expressing pleasure and approval with regard to his action.

CHAPTER XXIX

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

IN seeking for the predominant qualities which marked Leverhulme's character as a business man one finds, first and foremost, a great passion for construction and an indomitable courage. Of his passion for construction we have seen many instances in this narrative. He was essentially a builder. Just as it would have given him no pleasure to live in a house or possess a garden which offered no scope for enlargement or alteration, so it was with a business. He was always seeking fresh outlets for his energy, and when once an undertaking had reached a stage when it no longer occupied his full time and attention, he instinctively went in search of something new. We have seen how this characteristic was present from the beginning of his career. His father's wholesale grocery business had reached the reasonable limits of its expansion within its native boundaries of Bolton, and could only increase by keeping pace with the natural growth of the population and prosperity of the town, but Lever had not been in the business long before he was wanting to make it bigger, and this trait in his character led him to Wigan. Then there came a time when the position of the Wigan business was consolidated and he decided that his next step must be the marketing of his own proprietary brands of such products as soap, starch and flour. Sunlight Soap, as we have seen, won a popularity which decided him upon his future business career, but as far as one can judge on looking back, milling or the manufacture of starch might equally well have been the field of his further activities. Later this same craving for construction and expansion took him from Warrington to Port Sunlight, to the Continent, to America and the Dominions, to the Solomon Islands and the Belgian Congo. "How can I extend my business farther?" "How can I create an article to supply some particular public need?" "How can I obtain for myself a raw material for the supply of which I am at present dependent upon others?" These were the questions which he was constantly asking himself.

But Leverhulme was not a great builder only; he was, at the same time, a careful planner. He never departed from the practice which he had instituted at the Wigan warehouse of preparing *pro forma* accounts. He set forth again and again on the seas of adventure, but never at random; the results he set out to achieve might exceed or fall short of his expectations, but he was always in touch with fixed points, charted beforehand, from which he could take his bearings. He thought not one or two, but several years ahead. He might have in front of him, and be discussing with his colleagues, estimates for the next two years, but at the back of his own mind were approximate calculations for ten years ahead, and more often than not they proved to be uncannily correct.

Bracketed with his passion for construction I have placed his courage, for the two went together. To appreciate how great this courage was, one has to remember that in all his early undertakings he was acting alone, and in nearly every case against the advice of those around him. He became a soap-manufacturer against his father's counsel, and although James Lever may have been old-fashioned and conservative in his views, he had built up a sound and successful business of his own, and his opinions counted amongst those who knew him. A less determined and self-reliant son might well have hesitated under similar circumstances. In the earliest days of Lever Brothers he had the companionship of his brother, but unfortunately this partnership was all too short, and when J. D. Lever retired through ill health there was no one in the business to stand in quite the same relationship. During the 'nineties he gave Ordinary shares in Lever Brothers to one or two of his co-directors so that they might have a direct personal interest in the business, and feel that they were his partners and colleagues in the truest sense of the term. All went well until the time came to consider the building of another associated works in another foreign country; then a change came in their attitude. They saw difficulties, expressed doubts, counselled caution, became uneasy, and in each case Leverhulme eventually bought back, at a full price, the Ordinary shares which had originally been his gift. Only a man of rare courage and unquenchable faith in his business could have embarked, as he did in his earlier days, upon enterprise after enterprise, relying entirely on his own judgment and in the teeth of opposite opinions.

The two outstanding qualities I have mentioned are reflected in the growth and arrangement of the capital of Lever Brothers, which have no exact parallel, as far as I know, in any other large public company. It has been said that "the City" never cared for Leverhulme's system of finance. One reason may have been that the Stock Exchange would have liked to see more Ordinary shares and to have had at least some of them on the market, instead of the great bulk of the capital being in the more prosaic form of Preference shares; for Preference shares have neither the gilded and cautious security of the debenture on the one hand, nor the speculative and adventurous attractiveness of the Ordinary share on the other. But however far Leverhulme may have departed from orthodox and conventional practice in offering Preference and Preferred Ordinary shares to the public and retaining the whole of the Ordinary stock under his own control, even his most severe critic must admit that the system was a tribute to his own personal courage, for, as the owner of the Ordinary shares, he would have been the first to feel the effect of any mistaken policy or adverse circumstance. To appreciate fully his pioneering spirit and the courage which accompanied it, as well as, incidentally, his earnest desire to seek a solution to one of industry's greatest problems, one must ask oneself the question whether, had the majority of the Ordinary shares been in the hands of the investing public, the size and world-wide ramifications of the Company would have been what they are to-day, and whether the Co-partnership scheme—under the terms of which the Ordinary shareholders and the co-partners share equally in the balance of available profits, after the payment of a 5 per cent. dividend to the former—would have been assented to.

A great asset in Leverhulme's business life was the sound physique and excellent health with which he was blessed and which he studied with such care to preserve. The older he grew the greater his stamina and capacity for work appeared to become. His activity and energy became almost a legend, and he was very proud of his reputation in this respect. At seventy he was outwardly as robust and full of vitality as the average man of forty or fifty and deprecated any suggestion that he should seek to lighten the burden resting upon him. On a voyage home from the West Coast of Africa in 1921, just after my father's seventieth birthday, I occupied myself in writing for him a report regarding the administrative organization of Lever Brothers,

comprising a few tentative suggestions which had as their main purpose his relief from some small part, at least, of the detailed work and responsibilities which devolved upon him. He came out to join my steamer at Teneriffe, and on the way home I handed him the report. He read it through, marked one or two passages which he discussed with me, and then retired to his cabin, where he wrote me a long and wonderful letter thanking me for my filial solicitude, but assuring me that I was quite wrong in the most outspoken parts of my memorandum! On reaching home he locked the paper away in his safe, and I think it was the only business report of mine which he never showed to a single colleague.

Another strongly developed trait in Leverhulme's character was his conscientiousness. Not only in big issues, but in the detailed routine of each day's business he shirked or skimped nothing and he was intensely methodical in all he did. His correspondence may be taken as a case in point. Few public men in England can have had a heavier mail-bag, and yet every letter, no matter what the claims of the writer might be, received his personal attention and, in practically every case, he replied over his own signature. A colleague who joined him towards the end of his life once commented to me upon the extraordinary eagerness with which my father used to await the arrival of each day's budget of letters and reports. He was always at great pains, when away from London, to ensure that all his correspondence was forwarded to him with the minimum of delay, and when it arrived, no matter what he happened to be doing, he would at once open the packet and glance through its contents. One day's budget was much like another's—business reports, sales sheets and statistics, letters seeking his support and interest in a variety of directions, invitations to open bazaars and address meetings, relieved from time to time by that oasis in the desert of a public man's correspondence, the disinterested and personal letter of a close and intimate friend. One of the main reasons for his restlessness, once the post-bag had arrived, was that only by dealing with his letters almost as fast as they came could he save himself from being snowed under. Once or twice when he went abroad my father entrusted his personal correspondence to me, and I remember telling him afterwards that I thought a great many of his letters need never be replied to by himself personally, and in fact that there was, if his secretaries were given greater

powers of discretion, an appreciable number which he need never see; but he would never forgo his direct personal touch upon every letter which reached him, however seemingly trivial. Latterly he did save his own time to some extent by instituting a system of coloured slips—each secretary having a distinct colour—with various types of reply indicated on them, so that by means of a tick against the one he wanted, a letter could be written for him to sign. Again, and this is another example of his conscientiousness, he would never allow the smallest act of friendship or courtesy to pass unacknowledged. "May I suggest one way in which your correspondence could be cut down a little?" I said to him one day. "Well, how?" he answered. "By no longer writing to people to thank them for thanking you," I replied. "Do I?" he said, "perhaps you're right." Another amazing thing was the number of letters to private friends which he wrote in his own handwriting, especially when he was travelling abroad. During his last voyage to the Congo and West Africa he kept methodical statistics of all the letters he wrote. He was away about five months—in the heat of the Tropics it must be remembered—and he wrote 245 letters to relatives (an average of 5½ per person), 365 to friends (an average of 2½ per person), and 878 business letters (an average of 3½ per person), making a total of 1,488, and in the first two categories the large majority were in his own handwriting. In these days, when even in private correspondence the pen has been so largely displaced by the typewriter, especially amongst business men, Leverhulme's practice of writing so much in his own hand appears the more remarkable. He always held that typescript had a certain coldness and formality in it and could never strike the same personal note as one's own handwriting.

In the arrangement of each day's business there was the same thoroughness. Before coming down to his breakfast at 7.30 he had already spent from two to three hours reading reports and correspondence. On reaching the office he dictated his letters, the time which this took being considerably reduced after the introduction of the coloured slip device, and then devoted the rest of the morning to interviews with directors, managers and outside callers. His work was largely the same in the afternoon except that, as mentioned elsewhere, he often held informal meetings with his colleagues and others at "The Hill." "The Chairman," it was true to say, was the most

accessible man in the business ; everyone was free to send him a report, to forward a suggestion, or to seek an interview. More than once, with the sole object of saving his time and lessening the strain upon him, it was suggested that the channels through which matters reached him might be limited, but he never agreed. His door was always open and he sought to know personally, as far as it was possible in such a large concern, everyone who occupied a position of responsibility, while out of office hours he availed himself of every opportunity to attend social gatherings and entertainments connected with the firm, and after his ball-room at Hampstead was built, each of the London staffs was in turn given a dance there.

There was a phrase which Leverhulme often used in speeches and addresses : " Enlightened self-interest," and the expression crystallizes his business philosophy. Self-interest, it was clear to him, must always remain the mainspring of industry. He had no patience with those who suggested that because a business to be successful had to make profits, commerce was on that account a less exalted career. The making of profits was the sign of an undertaking's vitality and health, not necessarily the " be all and end all " of its existence. Without self-interest humanity would stagnate and decay ; but self-interest alone was civilization at its lowest, while enlightened self-interest was civilization at its highest. " The truest and highest form of enlightened self-interest," he said in a speech delivered in 1900, " requires that we pay the fullest regard to the interest and welfare of those around us, whose welfare we must bind up with our own, and with whom we must share our prosperity." He used to say that he did not care for competitive games, because he found all the competition he needed in business. Business, indeed, was to him a game, not in the derogatory sense in which the term is sometimes used, but a game which, however hard the fight, must be governed by the strictest rules and codes, a game which brings out the best qualities in a man. The fact that he was an ideal captain of his side was another of the secrets of his success. He was a shrewd judge of character and exercised a tremendous influence upon those with whom he worked. He was able to use men to their fullest advantage, for he was quick to discern their strong points and to place them in the positions where they could be of the greatest service. His policy was to look for the best in a man ; to trust him ; to assume, unless he had reason to know the contrary, that

he was honest and sincere in his intentions; but he did not hesitate to deal drastically with anyone in whom he found his confidence had been misplaced. He was once asked how he judged an applicant seeking employment, and the following was the reply which he wrote :—

"My first attention is given to the applicant's eye and expression of face. If his eye meets mine with clearness, candour and frankness; if his features indicate activity without excitement, and self-control coupled with ambition; if in walking he does not shuffle his feet; if he is perfectly natural and free from nervousness in the placing of his hands during the conversation, I am so far favourably impressed with him.

"The first qualities I look for in an employee are loyalty, integrity and industry. If with these qualities are coupled ability, ambition, alertness and quickness of perception, he is additionally attractive. When vacancies occur requiring appointments from outside the staff, I find the filling of such vacancies full of uncertainty and surrounded with difficulties. To obtain suitable men the best course, in my opinion, is to develop and train them on one's own staff. I think it is essential to all businesses that men on the staff should feel that they have first choice, but here the great difficulty comes in. As the business gets larger, the heads of the firm come less and less into personal contact with the staff. This is the obstacle to personal selection from one's own staff, but it is not insuperable."

With those who made mistakes, provided they arose from lack of experience or errors in judgment, he was patient, often to a surprising degree. "The man who makes no mistakes does not usually make anything," was one of his favourite quotations of encouragement. He was once asked how many mistakes a person might be allowed. His reply was to the effect that if a man had to make an independent decision on five subjects of importance and was proved to have "hit the bull's eye" as far as two of them were concerned, to have gone a little astray in regard to another two, and to have been mistaken in the case of the fifth, he might certainly be regarded as competent, as long as he recognized and admitted the mistake and made a note of it for his future guidance. During his business life Leverhulme had to deal with many cases in which men found themselves unable to sustain the responsibilities entrusted to them, and the measures which he felt bound to take often entailed severance from the firm or a transfer to a position of less importance, but I can recall no case which, provided there was no defect of character lying at the root of the matter, was not treated with sympathy and understanding.

He considered that those who intended to make commerce their

only career should go straight from school to business. "Oxford and Cambridge," he once wrote, "dull the edge of a man for business, but they eminently fit him to be an all-round, sincere and capable man for public and social duties as well as business." On another occasion I remember his modifying this opinion by saying that, while the boy who went straight from school to business was ripe for responsibility at an earlier age than the University man, by the time both were thirty the latter was the equal of the former. On the whole, his prejudices were perhaps against the University man, and he firmly cherished the belief, in which no argument could shake him, that the University professor does all his work in the small hours and arises at an atrociously late hour in the morning, although, for some reason, he exempted the modern Universities from this censure.

Imagination he regarded as one of the essentials of a successful business man, but it had to be blended with blunt common sense. Business was rich in romance, but the romance had to be tempered by reality; there was plenty of room for the ideal, but it had to be combined with the practical.

"The difficulty with the business man," he once wrote, "is to get the imagination linked up with a desire for work and with a mathematical mind. . . . I continually meet business men who have got the imagination. They get the vision, they see the possibilities, but they are hopelessly wrong in estimates of ways and means and seem to be unable to understand accounts and figures. They are, therefore, rather a pitfall to their friends, who get won over with their wonderful vision of possibilities and trust them with their money only to lose it in any enterprise they go into. In other words, they are like birds with only one wing, the second wing is missing; or it may be that I have chosen a wrong simile, and that they are like birds without tail feathers to steer by."

Leverhulme freely sought the advice and assistance of experts, but in matters of higher policy no one recognized the limitations of the expert more than he did. To say this is to cast no reflection on those to whose help in technical matters and scientific research he was always ready to pay the highest tribute. It was, in fact, one of his ablest technical advisers who wrote as follows in a newspaper tribute after Leverhulme's death :—

"He had a certain mistrust—founded on experience—of so-called experts, particularly in the technical and chemical domains. It is often the case that those who are experts to the last detail lack the necessary breadth of horizon and forget that the detail worked out by them only represents a small link in the complicated machinery of production.

Many experts also entirely lack what the man in the street calls 'common sense.' Valuable and indispensable as are these specialists, working in their narrower domain, a much more comprehensive knowledge is necessary to apply their ideas to practical industry." [1]

Leverhulme often spoke of the great incentive which fear is in the affairs of men, and to illustrate what he meant I cannot do better than quote from a letter which he wrote to one of his colleagues in 1923. The slump which had followed the temporary boom in trade after the War, and the measures which had been taken to deal with the difficult circumstances to which it gave rise, had made it no longer possible to find work for all who had been formerly employed at Port Sunlight, and in the opening paragraphs of the letter Leverhulme expressed the opinion that it had been the fear in each man's mind lest he should be the next one to be affected that had led to greater individual effort and efficiency. He then went on to explain more fully what he meant by this stimulus of fear.

"I was rather disappointed when I came to this conclusion, after careful analysis, because it looks as if it is not a very ideal basis. But take myself as an example of the operation of this fear. I ask myself what has caused me to begin work at 4.30 in the morning during the last two or three years, and to work laborious hours, and to have only one absorbing thought, namely, my own efficiency and the maintenance of my own health for the task I have to perform; and I am bound to confess that it has not been the attraction of the dividends, but fear, merely cowardly fear. I could call it by lots of high-sounding names, but if I must be perfectly candid with myself I am convinced that it has been the gnawing fear in my heart that Lever Brothers might have to pass their dividends, and that I had placed myself in the position of accepting money from all classes of investors, including widows, spinsters, clergymen and others—all subscribers for Lever Brothers' shares from the confidence they had in the business and myself—who might possibly have to forgo their dividends, which would mean the probable curtailment of what they depended upon for their day to day food, clothing, rent, etc. Candidly, this has been my great fear, and this is what has caused me to get up at 4.30 in the morning.

"Now what has produced the efficiency since 1921? Not the fact of any increased bonus but the fact that we had to begin to comb out inefficient men. . . . But equally I think that fear does not go far enough; but do not let us forget that it is a powerful factor. In my case the reward has been in my gradually seeing the position improve, but supposing I had not seen the position improve and that the result had been that I had achieved nothing. Then it is obvious that 'fear'

[1] Mr. Carl F. Holmboe in an article in the *Norges Handels & Sjöfartstidende.*

could not have carried me very far. Therefore, whilst it is 'fear' that was the operating cause, it has been the gradual removal of fear that has produced a continuance of the effort. This sounds contradictory, but I am satisfied it is the fact.

"In applying this to our staff I say it is 'fear' that has brought about their efficiency, and if we could think of some system of awards and rewards that would greatly add to the interest of the daily round and common task, then it would produce still greater efficiency."

Many of Leverhulme's views on labour questions and the industrial side of business administration have been referred to elsewhere in this book and little need be added here. He believed in trade unions and always said that if he had been a "workman" he would have belonged to one, but he was too hard a worker himself to have much sympathy with any policy of "ca' canny" and such trade union rules and regulations as tended to check, rather than encourage, increased production.

"I am quite conscious that these trade union rules of to-day spring from nervousness and fear of unemployment, whereas it may be a fact that these rules produce unemployment," he said in an interview given to a Bolton reporter on his seventieth birthday. "We cannot blame a man, or a group of men, or leaders of men who, if they feel a certain policy will result in unemployment, adopt methods—even mistaken methods, but right as far as they know—to correct it. But time will prove that all these methods are wrong. We have only to prove that to the Bolton man or to the Britisher anywhere and he will not need telling twice. We must be patient. I am certain the right feeling is coming."

He knew that the idea of keeping wages as low as possible was a fallacy. The higher the wages the greater the spending power of the nation and the greater its commercial prosperity; but hand in hand with high wages had to go the unfettered freedom of each man to do his best, otherwise higher wages simply led to higher costs of living and the one cancelled the other. With the later political developments of trade-unionism he felt little sympathy. That assured contributions from a vested interest, whether it be an industry or a trade union, should flow into the coffers of a particular political party, he considered wholly bad. Trade unions, to his mind, stood in the same light as associations of manufacturers, both being eminently desirable from most points of view; but he held that the workman, as an individual, should be as free in his choice as to whether he should join his trade organization as the manufacturer is free in his choice. When Leverhulme was in the House of Commons he voted for the Trade Disputes Act of 1906, which reversed the Taff Vale decision,

believing, at the time, that the unions would make a reasonable use of the rights conferred upon them; but that he afterwards considered the measure to have been founded upon false hopes is shown in a letter which he wrote in July 1924 to his friend, Jonathan Simpson, to whom he ever spoke his inmost thoughts.

"I must bear my full share of responsibility," the letter runs, "because it (the Act in question) was passed by the 1906 Parliament, of which I was a member, and my vote was one in favour of the reversal of the Taff Vale decision which made trade-unionists liable, like any of the rest of us, for any damage they might cause and consequential loss. On the face of it, the Taff Vale decision looked an impossible decision; but the alternative gives such liberty and freedom to trade-unionists that they can do pretty well as much as they like."

Leverhulme saw Capital and Labour as equally vital parts of the machinery of industry, not as diametrically opposed forces inevitably committed to conflict. To stand upright a stool must have three legs, and the three legs which gave stability to industry were Capital, Labour and Management; but they were not necessarily separate and distinct entities. The proprietor of a small shop employing no assistant was all three rolled into one; the shareholder who took an active part in the business in which he held shares represented both Capital and Management or Capital and Labour, depending upon his status. Then again, who could say exactly where "management" left off and "labour" began? A foreman was a link in the chain of management and yet, viewed from another standpoint, he might be considered as falling within the category of labour. If we wish to appreciate Leverhulme's point of view, therefore, we must think of Capital, Labour and Management in the light of abstract factors entering into the organization of industry rather than as separate groups of individuals wearing the badges of rival armies.

"Capital is the best friend that Labour ever had," Leverhulme pointed out in an article contributed to the *Evening Standard* of November 2nd, 1920, "and Labour is not always mindful of this fact. . . . It is essential, in any reference to capital, that the meaning of the word should be understood. Capital is merely the accumulated savings of people who are able to produce more than they consume. This country, and the world, owes its present prosperity to the men and women who produce more than they consume and who, out of their savings, are able to invest in undertakings which in turn find employment for what is called labour."

It was sometimes said that Leverhulme's Co-partnership ideals did not go far enough because his scheme made no provision

for giving to " Labour " a share in the control of the business. He always contended that it should be made possible in any business for anyone engaged in it to work his way up to a directorship, and his own Board was, in fact, mainly composed of those who had entered the firm in junior capacities and by their own merits qualified themselves for higher responsibilities. But that a workman should be given a seat on a Board of Directors merely to " represent " Labour was, to Leverhulme's mind, placing pure sentiment in front of sound judgment, practical experience and administrative efficiency. His favourite analogy when dealing with this question was that of the herring trawler, where the profit of the catch is divided in fixed proportions between those taking part in the venture, from the owner and captain down to the cabin boy. No one, he said, would in such a case suggest that a member of the crew or the cabin boy should be asked to share in the responsibility of navigating the ship, or that the skipper should be elected by the popular vote of the crew. Earlier in the article in the *Evening Standard* from which I have quoted, Leverhulme referred to this same question, and the following paragraphs may be usefully quoted to amplify his views :—

" The working-man director who is unacquainted with the duties devolving on a director in all their complexity of finance, transport, markets, bills of exchange, warrants, shipping documents and all the machinery of commerce, is no more likely to make a success as a director than was the mid-Victorian director chosen merely for his family connections, his high social standing, and the influence which it was anticipated that his name would bring to the Company. It would be interesting to have a calculation made as to the amount of money that has been lost by shareholders who have invested in companies merely because of the high social standing and high reputation in every walk of life, except business, of the directors. More and more, each succeeding year, business will require efficiency, from the youngest office boy to the chairman of the company, and all these academic discussions as to the new relationships between Capital and Labour can only result in disappointment unless we start first, last, and all the time from the point of view of better service to the public. We shall none of us need to mount the public platform to force upon unwilling employers and capitalists any sound theory that obviously must make for greater output, with improved quality and reduced price. Any ideal that can achieve better service to the public will grow and increase on its own vitality, as does the acorn until it becomes a mighty oak."

In this chapter I have attempted to outline some of Leverhulme's views on business and industry and to suggest some of

the causes of his success. In reviewing his career one is struck not only by the enormous size of the world-wide business of which he was the head, but also by the way in which he controlled it with a personal authority and an individual touch which could never have been attempted by anyone called fresh to such a task. One can only understand it by remembering that Lever Brothers from its earliest beginnings was his own creation; he saw the sapling grow and put forth branches and become a tree. Of the great piece of business machinery which he left behind him he had made the essential parts himself, other parts he had bought, studied carefully and fitted into their appropriate places in the structure. The man who makes the machine is, or ought to be, the man who knows most about it. This intimate knowledge of the business, born of experience and fortified by a remarkably retentive memory, quite apart from his other qualities, gave Leverhulme an authority which was unique. But he could not have got through the volume of business which this position of almost autocratic authority entailed had he not been able to work at a speed and in a manner which were a bewilderment to the average man. He was able, almost at a glance, to differentiate between the relevant and the irrelevant. Just as in a building—one is tempted to choose his favourite hobby as a metaphor—certain parts can be pointed to as carrying the strain and supporting the structure, the rest being detail and ornament, so, with any business report or proposition, Leverhulme was quick to separate the essential from the trivial. One brief survey of a balance sheet showed him its strong points or its weak ones. He had a ready knack of resolving a problem into its simplest elements. Often, when one took a seemingly complicated and difficult matter to him he would, by means of a few questions and answers, make it appear extraordinarily simple and the correct solution at once obvious. "The conduct of successful business," he told an audience of Liverpool undergraduates in 1922, "merely consists of doing things in a very simple way, doing them regularly and never neglecting to do them." Such was the way in which Leverhulme, day by day, dealt with the great volume of work which reached him, or perhaps it would be more correct to say, of which he went in search. The power to break down the complicated into the simple: to watch him at work was to realize that therein lay the secret of the quality and quantity as well as the rapidity of his decisions.

CHAPTER XXX

PUBLIC WORK

IT has been said that it is the busy man who always finds time for things, and this was certainly true in my father's case. Every hour of his day was occupied, and during the latter part of his life he never took a holiday in the popular sense of the word. He found his recreation in change of occupation, rather than in relaxation. Had he had no interest save business, he could never have stood the strain, robust as he was, that is certain. It was the fact that his mind was occupied in a variety of directions that enabled him to maintain his exceptional vitality and energy until the end. From business he could turn to Art and the pleasure he found in adding to his collections and in arranging and rearranging them. His open-air diversions were the making of gardens and roads, the development of his estates and travelling to one or another of his overseas companies; while in contrast to all these activities were those duties and undertakings which may be considered under the general heading of Public Work. The time which he found himself able to devote to public duties was amazing, when one considers the crowded hours of his business life and the many other interests which claimed his attention.

Leverhulme's public work may conveniently be considered under two headings—firstly Public Benefactions and Undertakings, and secondly Personal Service. For one possessed of the requisite means, it is comparatively easy to fill the rôle of a public benefactor; a cheque-book, pen and ink and a banking account are about all that is necessary; importunate friends and skilful charity organizers will do the rest. But this method is, after all, the line of least resistance; and Leverhulme never cared for lines of least resistance. By this I do not mean that the list of his subscriptions and donations to charitable objects and institutions was a small one; the very opposite was the case. The point I wish to make clear is that he preferred to plan and carry out a particular undertaking entirely by himself, so that the whole of it might be his own work, rather than to give away the

sum of money which was involved, part of it going to one charity and part of it to another. It was not that he wanted a monopoly of credit or thanks; but because he was by nature an uncompromising individualist and preferred to carry a purpose through in his own way, in his own time and—it follows as a corollary—at his own expense. Fulsome thanks embarrassed him. A friend, with whom he was walking one day along one of the many roads which he constructed at Rivington, asked him why he was so fond of road-making. "Well, for one thing," he replied, "no one sees the ultimate usefulness of a road at the time I make it, and the result is no one thanks me for it." "The road-maker is the best anonymous servant of humanity," he said on another occasion; "he drives a great broad thoroughfare from town to town, and for generations men travel over the road, with all their hopes and fears, with all their cares and joys, never once asking who it was that made their way easier for them. A road-maker's life is full of rich solitude and invisible rewards."

Many of Leverhulme's gifts to the public are mentioned in other chapters, Hall-i'-th'-Wood, the Bolton School and Lever Park, Rivington, as well as the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight, being cases in point. Several may be more conveniently alluded to in this chapter.

In 1912 he bought Stafford House from the Duke of Sutherland. Built in the reign of George IV, the house replaced another celebrated London mansion, Cleveland House, built by the famous Duchess of Cleveland, mistress of Charles II, on a part of the site of Berkshire House, which the King had given to her as a residence. During the Victorian era Stafford House was celebrated for the splendour of its hospitality, as well as for its service in philanthropic causes. Within its walls William Lloyd Garrison and Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe advocated the cause of the American slave; the Earl of Shaftesbury pleaded for better conditions of labour at home, and Garibaldi won sympathy and support for a united Italy. Its famous staircase was the *mise en scène* of many brilliant receptions.

"The night before last," wrote Greville in his memoirs in 1835, "there was a great concert on the staircase at Stafford House, the most magnificent assembly I ever saw, and such as I think no crowned head in Europe could display. The appearance of the hall was like one of Paul Veronese's pictures, and only wanted some tapestry to be hung over the balustrades."

Disraeli introduced the house into *Lothair* under the pseudonym of Crecy House, describing it as "one of the half-dozen stately structures which our capital can boast." But the most frequently quoted compliment to the glories of Stafford House is the one paid by Queen Victoria when she said to the then Duchess of Sutherland, "I have come from my house to your palace." When the news of my father's purchase was first made public, it was unknown for what definite purpose he intended to use the historic mansion; but a letter to the Prime Minister (Mr. Asquith) dated April 26th, 1913, and signed by Mr. Harley, his solicitor, and Mr. (now Sir) Howard Frank, through whom the purchase had been made, conveyed his offer of the building to the nation for housing the London Museum collections, then in Kensington Palace, and for any other similar purposes which might seem proper to the Government. "Sir William," the letter added, "would be very glad if hereafter it appeared possible that some of the rooms could be utilized for purposes of Government entertainment to distinguished visitors, given under the provision of the Hospitality Fund." On May 1st the Prime Minister replied, expressing the thanks of the Government and their acceptance of the offer. It was my father's desire that the name of the house should be altered from Stafford House to Lancaster House. As the building was to become the property of the nation, it was appropriate that it should bear this name, "Duke of Lancaster" being one of the King's titles; and the fact that it was the gift of a Lancashire man was an additional reason for the change. Although there were several precedents, "the powers that be" were not at first eager to adopt the proposal; but thanks to the support of Lord Derby and others, my father eventually gained his point, and it was as Lancaster House that the building was opened to the public in March 1914 as the home of the London Museum, with its interesting collection of relics of bygone London.

Leverhulme's gifts to churches and religious institutions were by no means limited to those of his own faith and order, although Congregationalism was the cause which benefited the most. He built altogether four churches, and three of them—the Congregational Church in Blackburn Road, Bolton; Christ Church, Port Sunlight; and St. George's, Thornton Hough—were not only valuable gifts to his denomination, but, as we have seen, distinctive contributions to the ecclesiastical architecture

of the country. As examples of the new spirit in Nonconformist architecture, they are probably unsurpassed. The fourth which he built was a Congregational church in the township of Neston, about three miles from Thornton Hough. Some years before the church was built he subscribed towards the erection of a large Liberal club in Neston. In 1906, however, it became involved in financial difficulties, so he purchased the building outright, and, severing it from its political associations, converted it into an institute to be devoted to social and recreational activities during the week, and to religious services and Sunday school work on Sundays. From this religious work sprang the Congregational church I have referred to. It is built of wood, and while in no way comparable to the others for which Leverhulme was responsible, it is far more "architectural" than the average building of the same type. In bygone days a small community of "Independents" had existed in Neston and the neighbouring village of Parkgate, and in their memory and as a mark of continuity, he placed three stained-glass windows in the chancel.

To the Congregational Union he was a frequent benefactor, and followed its work with deep interest, especially those branches of it which were devoted to the provision of more adequate remuneration to its ministers, the care of their widows and the education of their children. He also contributed substantially to the building of Cheshunt College, Cambridge, an undenominational training centre for theological students. But it was in his native town of Bolton that perhaps his most distinctive service to Congregationalism was rendered, for in 1919 he instituted there a scheme which introduced an entirely new note into the administrative methods of his denomination. The distinguishing feature of Congregationalism is the complete independence of each individual Church and congregation. Leverhulme felt, however, that, while this undoubtedly made for self-reliance, it tended at the same time towards exclusiveness and isolation. Under the plan which he introduced in Bolton, generally referred to as "the Group Scheme," twelve of the Congregational Churches in the town and its neighbourhood were federated together and the income derived from his endowment was used, in fixed proportions, for augmenting the stipends of their respective ministers. An advisory committee was appointed, consisting of two ministers and one layman, the Rev. J. D. Jones being one of the former, and this committee

was to be consulted with regard to the filling of any vacant pastorates. After a five years' trial, the success of which was in no small measure due to the impetus given to the new movement by the Rev. R. W. Thompson, the minister of St. George's Road Congregational Church, the senior Church in the group, Leverhulme gave a further endowment, which enabled two more Churches to be included, and the supplementary stipends in some of the others to be increased. Bolton Congregationalism has benefited from the scheme in two main directions: the separate congregations have been drawn closer together in religious work and social intercourse, and the more prosperous Churches have felt a maternal responsibility for those in districts less able to give financial support.

With the work of Foreign Missionary Societies Leverhulme did not find himself, at all points, in sympathy; but where the task of converting the native races was coupled with a practical programme of general education and training in handicrafts and industrial pursuits—as was the case, for example, with the missionary enterprises of the Catholic Fathers in the Belgian Congo and the undertaking founded by the late Rev. F. W. Walker in New Guinea, under the title of "Papuan Industries, Ltd."—the work received his full support.

"Mr. Lever seldom does anything like other people." These words, an apt tribute to the individuality of many of his public undertakings, are from a leading article in the *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury* of March 8th, 1910, referring to the public announcement of a gift to the University of Liverpool, amounting in value to over £100,000, of which £91,000 represented the damages awarded in the newspaper libel actions of 1907. The branches of the University which shared in the gift were the School of Architecture—especially the department of Civic Design (Town Planning and Landscape Architecture), which he had founded in the spring of 1909; the School of Tropical Medicine and the School of Russian Studies.

When the Liverpool Blue Coat School, having outgrown its beautiful home in School Lane, removed to its new premises in Wavertree, my father rescued the old building from demolition, and finally completed the purchase of it in 1914. In 1909 he placed the building at the disposal of the University as a home for the School of Architecture, offering, at the end of five years, either to give the building to the University or to provide a sum of

money for the erection of a new school elsewhere. The University finally chose the latter alternative. My father was anxious that the new department of Civic Design should be a pattern for other town-planning schools in the country, and to this end he arranged for Mr. C. H. Reilly, the Professor of Architecture in Liverpool University, to visit America in order to collect all available information and literature on the subject, and to investigate the curricula of American institutes and schools connected with Town Planning. The new department began its work in October 1909, under the direction of Professor Adshead.

My father had in preparation plans for enlarging and altering the Old Blue Coat School—renamed Liberty Buildings—so that it might become a permanent centre for artistic interests in Lancashire, and it was his intention to found, in connection with the building, a society to be called "The Lancashire Society of Arts," and also a system of fellowships, under which distinguished British and foreign artists could be invited, from time to time, to work and teach in Liverpool. When the War broke out, however, these plans had to be abandoned, and although the building has continued to play a most useful part in the artistic life of the city, by housing the Sandon Studios Society and in other ways, my father's original scheme must unfortunately be numbered amongst his unfulfilled ambitions.

His services to the cause of Architecture and Town Planning were recognized by his election in 1910 to an Honorary Associateship of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and ten years later to an Honorary Fellowship. Few men can have done more for Civic Art. Not only did he plan and build Port Sunlight, lay out several other estates and villages, and found the Department of Civic Design in Liverpool University, but he helped the movement in many other ways. Imagine his amusement when, at a lecture on Town Planning in London, a well-known public man tapped him on the shoulder and exclaimed, "Hello, Lever! I had no idea you took an interest in these recondite subjects!"

My father was appointed chairman of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in January 1910, in succession to the late Sir Alfred Jones, and filled the office for three years. He was a close friend and warm admirer of two distinguished pioneers in Tropical Research, both closely associated with the early development of the Liverpool School—the late Sir Rubert Boyce and Sir Ronald Ross, whose discovery in 1897 of the life

history of malarial parasites in mosquitoes has been perhaps the prime factor in making the Tropics reasonably healthy for the white races. To Ross, in the course of many difficulties and misunderstandings, so often the lot of pioneers in specialized branches of medicine, he gave constant and sympathetic support.

But Leverhulme's gifts to Universities were not confined only to Liverpool; in 1919 he endowed a chair of Physical Chemistry at Bristol University, and in 1923 he contributed to a new Science building at the University of Edinburgh, which four years earlier had conferred upon him the honorary degree of LL.D. in recognition, more particularly, of his work in Lewis and Harris.

Of institutions and charities directly or indirectly connected with his business he was a warm supporter. He was instrumental in founding the Federation of Grocers' Associations of the United Kingdom, and was one of the first Presidents of the Institute of Certificated Grocers, founded in 1909 to promote the technical education of assistants in the grocery trade. To each student, on qualifying for membership, he gave a copy of Smiles's *Self Help*, accompanied by a message expressing his hope that the book might be to the recipient the same help that it had been to him in his own youth. He also took a great personal interest in the London Commerical Travellers' Benevolent Society, and filled the office of president continuously from the year 1906. In 1923 he gave an endowment to the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain to provide three scholarships, as well as certain prizes and medals, for pharmaceutical students. He was a Trustee of the National Advertising Society from 1913, the year of its foundation, and became president in 1923. In 1922 he was chairman at the annual dinner of the Newspaper Press Fund. It was a notable year in the history of this charity, for not only was the amount raised through the dinner a record one, but an all-star *matinée* in aid of the fund was given in the presence of the King and Queen at Drury Lane Theatre, which had just undergone reconstruction. Leverhulme gave a dinner and dance at "The Hill" to the organizers of this *matinée* and the artists who took part in it.

In 1910 he was president of the Congress of the Royal Institute of Public Health held at Birkenhead, and gave a garden-party at Thornton Manor to the delegates. A year later, when the Congress was held in Dublin, he stayed at the Vice-Regal Lodge as the guest of Lord Aberdeen, and invested Lady Aberdeen

with the presidential chain of office. In 1913 he equipped at the Institute's headquarters in Russell Square a museum—named by the Institute " The Lever Museum "—for a complete collection of the micro-organisms responsible for the more important infectious diseases and other pathological exhibits of interest to students of public health. The Museum was formally opened by Earl Beauchamp, who was at that time the First Commissioner of Works and, incidentally, president of the Institute. After being a vice-president for several years Leverhulme became president of the Institute in 1918. After the War he assisted in launching the People's League of Health, founded by Miss Olga Nethersole, to encourage, by means of literature and lectures, a more widespread interest in matters affecting the health of the community.

In the " Safety First " Movement he took a keen interest, for he had been one of the first employers in the country to appoint a Safety Inspector, and even from America, the home of the Movement, inquiries as to the methods practised at Port Sunlight had often reached him. He was the first president of the British Industrial " Safety First " Association and a vice-president of the London " Safety First " Council.

When the Hampstead Garden Suburb was founded by Mrs. (now Dame Henrietta) Barnett and others in 1905, he was one of the original guarantors, and was afterwards appointed one of the trustees for the debenture holders.

In February 1918 Leverhulme read before the Royal Society of Arts a paper entitled " Zero Yields of Capital and Labour." This address, which will be found in its entirety in *The Six-Hour Day*, was a timely argument against the theory of a Capital Levy, a proposal which he likened to the cutting out of the roots of the tree of national trade and credit, in contrast to the " root pruning " of death duties and the annual " harvesting " of income tax and super-tax. In the following March he was appointed a vice-president of the Royal Society of Arts and a member of its Council to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Sir John Wolfe Barry.

In the year 1921 the Society of Chemical Industry received a bequest from the late Dr. Rudolph Messel, F.R.S., the well-known chemical manufacturer, and to perpetuate his memory the Council decided to award biennially a medal called the " Messel " medal to some eminent man, distinguished either in

chemical science or in chemical industry, who should be asked to deliver the Messel Memorial Lecture at the annual meeting of the Society. In 1924, when the Society held its annual meeting in Liverpool, Leverhulme was asked to accept the Messel medal and deliver the lecture. He called his address "Science, Religion and Workshop," and in it he sought a reconciliation between the objectives of Science and Religion, and showed how our social and industrial relationships are governed by moral laws—the Ten Commandments, the doctrines of the Sermon on the Mount and the principle of the Golden Rule—as universal in their application and consequences as are the laws of Nature which Science has revealed to us.

As an after-dinner speaker and on the platform, Leverhulme was forceful, sincere and convincing. His voice was clear and resonant. In the Auditorium at Port Sunlight, which holds three thousand people and is a most difficult hall in which to speak, his words carried to the farthest corner. Many of his most important industrial speeches were delivered in this building, and so accustomed to it was he that in smaller rooms he was inclined to exert his voice unnecessarily. He spoke with every evidence of physical as well as mental energy. Only on rare occasions, and towards the end of his life, did he read his speeches, but he always prepared them carefully, making brief notes on long, narrow slips of paper cut specially to suit his own requirements. Nearly all his addresses were liberally besprinkled with anecdotes, and the "pointers" for these were always jotted down in red ink—just three or four words, enough to recall the whole story to his mind—the other headings for his notes being written in black ink. He generally stood with his sheaf of notes in one hand, usually his right, and the other hand behind his back with the fingers clenched. He had few mannerisms or gestures; sometimes he raised and lowered the hand which held his notes to emphasize some particular point, but he never thumped the table. He had a remarkable facility for adapting himself to his audience; at a gathering of children, a meeting of his employees, a political demonstration, a public dinner, a Rotarian luncheon, a Sunday-school anniversary, a P.S.A. or "Brotherhood" Service, in fact in all the varied circumstances under which he was invited to speak, he was equally at home and in touch with his audience. But, although the public recognized him as a ready and fluent speaker, he only became

so through constant practice and determination. Apart from speeches given in connection with his own business, at small meetings of the staff, he never spoke in public until he was thirty-eight, for he took no part in public life until he went to live at Thornton Manor. His first public speech was given at the New Ferry Cocoa Rooms in the year 1889, and contemporaries have told me that in those days he was visibly, almost painfully, nervous and self-conscious on the platform. In the first election which he fought in Birkenhead, speech-making was by no means his strong point. In the second contest he had greatly improved, but in the third he was entirely master of himself and of his audiences, an achievement which bore witness to much pains-taking self-discipline. His use of anecdotes and stories added greatly to the popularity and effectiveness of his speeches. He seemed to have an inexhaustible fund of stories, and people often wondered how he managed to remember so many. Whenever he heard a good story he made a note of it. He was always on the look-out for anecdotes in books, magazines and newspapers. He carried about with him a waistcoat pocket diary, in which the salient points of the stories in his repertoire were jotted down under different headings—Scotsmen, Lawyers, Doctors and so on—so that he could readily turn up a story appropriate to the occasion. In his speeches, however, he never introduced a story merely for the sake of getting a laugh. Each anecdote was there to illustrate a point he wished to drive home or to embellish a particular line of argument. He often altered or adapted a story in a variety of ways, and used the same story to serve many purposes. In this connection one recalls his favourite story of the stage coach in Australia before the days of railways. A newly arrived traveller booked a first-class ticket on the coach, thinking he would get one of the best seats, but when he found that first-, second- and third-class passengers all sat where they liked, or where they could, he was at a loss to understand the point of paying more for one class of travel than another. His understanding was enlightened, however, when the coach reached the foot of the first steep hill and the guard called out, "First-class passengers, keep your seats! Second-class passengers get down and walk! Third-class passengers, get down and push!" The story is obviously capable of many applications.

Leverhulme was a zealous and, as far as the claims upon his time permitted, an active Freemason. His Masonic career

began on July 8th, 1902, when he was initiated at the first meeting of the William Hesketh Lever Lodge (No. 2916) at Port Sunlight. The Lodge was founded by Masons living in Port Sunlight and its neighbourhood, most of whom were associated with Lever Brothers, and it was their desire that it should be named after the Chairman of the Company. After serving the Lodge in various offices, he was installed as Worshipful Master in 1907. The following year he became a Grand Senior Warden of Cheshire, and in 1918 he was appointed Junior Grand Warden in the United Grand Lodge of England and Grand Scribe N. in the Supreme Grand Chapter of Royal Archmasons of England. A year later he became Senior Grand Warden in the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales. In my account of the Lady Lever Art Gallery will be found a description of the Masonic Temple which it contains. It was dedicated to Masonic purposes on August 31st, 1922, and on the same day the Leverhulme Lodge (No. 4438)—the second to bear his name—was consecrated. Altogether he was a member of twenty-seven English Lodges and one Scottish Lodge (the Lodge Fortrose in Stornoway), and of five Chapters. Of these Lodges and Chapters he assisted in the founding of seventeen and passed through the chairs of three.

He was a Liveryman of two City Companies, the Worshipful Company of Gardeners and the Worshipful Company of Stationers.

The claims of business, at home and abroad, prevented Leverhulme from taking any prolonged part in Local Government affairs. In 1901, however, he filled, at the unanimous invitation of its members, the office of chairman of the Bebington Urban District Council, and from 1903 to 1904 he sat on the Cheshire County Council. In 1911 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Cheshire. His service in both Houses of Parliament and on various Government committees and commissions is touched upon elsewhere. Unfortunately, during the last twelve years of his life his defective hearing placed a severe limitation upon his participation in many forms of public service for which his commercial experience ably qualified him, and on several occasions he was obliged to excuse himself from duties for which he was otherwise peculiarly fitted. A case in point occurred in May 1919 when he was asked by Mr. Winston Churchill, who was then Secretary of State for Air, to be a member of the

Committee, of which Lord Weir was the chairman, appointed by the Government to report upon the best method of organizing Imperial air routes and to advise upon other matters connected with the development of civil aviation.

As an opener of bazaars and sales of work in aid of all kinds of objects, more especially churches and Sunday-schools, Leverhulme was in constant demand, and the number of these engagements which he managed to squeeze into his busy life was astonishing. His addresses on these occasions were invariably full of anecdotes, and he would often wander from the main subject of his speech in order to deal with some important topic of the day, knowing that, through the medium of the Press, he was reaching a wider audience than the small gathering of people usually to be found at these weekday afternoon ceremonies. Whenever he was prevented from fulfilling an engagement of this nature he made it a private rule to double the donation which he had intended to give.

From 1917 to 1918 my father was High Sheriff of his native county of Lancashire. Owing to the War his Shrievalty was shorn of much of the pageantry and many of the social duties usually connected with the office. Grand Juries, for instance, had been temporarily dispensed with, and therefore the customary dinners to the members of the Grand Juries—an important feature in a High Sheriff's term of office—did not fall to his lot. The demands of the office vary with the size and importance of the county, and in the case of Lancashire they are the heaviest of all, for, in the course of a year, there are three Assizes, generally with long calendars, at Liverpool and Manchester, as well as two Assizes of a lighter character at Lancaster ; the claims upon my father's time were therefore considerable. At the end of his year he presented to the county, for the use of succeeding High Sheriffs, the motor-car which he had used when in attendance upon the Judges.

In the autumn of 1918 Leverhulme accepted the Mayoralty of Bolton for the ensuing municipal year. It was not expected that he could devote the same amount of time to the office as is possible in the case of a resident Mayor, but he presided over each monthly meeting of the Council and, as far as it was in his power, kept in touch with the work of committees, and played an active part generally in the affairs of the borough. On April 23rd, 1919, his third grandchild, Rosemary Lever, was born, and to commemorate the event the members of the Council

presented a silver cradle to his daughter-in-law (my wife), who acted as Mayoress. The end of the War came a few days after he had entered office, and in the local thanksgivings and celebrations which followed he took a leading part, giving a Victory Ball in the Town Hall, and in the following summer a garden-party and fête in Queen's Park, attended by nearly three thousand people, including all the ex-Service men of Bolton and their wives and families.

Into all the details of Leverhulme's work as Mayor it is impossible to enter, and only two or three of the most important matters can be touched upon here. He found a complicated differential system of rating in force, Bolton having as many as fourteen different district rates. His mind naturally rebelled against any system that was unnecessarily complicated and wasteful, and he strongly urged that these districts should be unified and a consolidated rate introduced. While it was impossible to effect the change during his year of office, such reforms being lengthy and difficult matters, it is significant that the Bolton Corporation Act of 1922 embodied many of the improvements for which he had pressed.

On February 5th, 1919, he attended a meeting of the Bolton Managers' and Overlookers' Association, and in the course of his speech offered to arrange, at his own expense, for five members of the Association to visit the United States for a period of five weeks in order to study the conditions existing in the American cotton industry. The offer was readily accepted, and a delegation visited the States and Canada during the following autumn. The result of this visit was afterwards published in book form, it being a condition of Leverhulme's offer that each of his guests should write a report for the benefit of those engaged in the cotton trade in Bolton.

In 1914 the Corporation had entered into negotiations for some 67 acres of land on the easterly side of the town for the purpose of a public park. When the War broke out, however, Government restrictions made it impossible to raise all the money necessary for the purchase, and Leverhulme, learning of the predicament in which the Council was placed, expressed his willingness to buy the land himself and give it to the town. He afterwards bought some further pieces of land in order to enlarge the park, and this open space, named by the Corporation "Leverhulme Park," now extends to 98 acres, of which 88 were my father's gift.

He was familiar with all the highways and by-ways of Bolton, and over a period of many years he had been turning over in his mind possible improvements in the planning of the town and schemes for controlling its future civic development. To give concrete shape to his proposals and to influence public opinion, he sought the advice and co-operation of Thomas H. Mawson, who was then Lecturer on Landscape Design at the University of Liverpool, and the result was the publication, in 1911, of *Bolton—a Study in Town Planning and Civic Art*, in which Mawson elaborated and gave technical expression to the preliminary plans which his client had sketched. Public interest in the subject was further stimulated by six lectures which Mawson delivered under the auspices of the Bolton Housing and Town Planning Society. These addresses formed the basis of a larger illustrated book published in 1916 under the title of *Bolton—as it is and as it might be.*

In 1924, however, the question of the future town planning of Bolton became a problem of immediate practical concern, for the Corporation was faced with the necessity of providing additional municipal offices, and a scheme was prepared which included an extension to the Town Hall, the erection of a Sessions House, new Police Buildings, and Public Health Offices, as well as a Library and Art Gallery. Leverhulme naturally studied the plans with great interest, but, while including all the improvements and extensions which were immediately necessary, they seemed to him to be lacking in vision and imagination, and to be far from providing the type of civic centre which would be called for in the Bolton of fifty or sixty years hence, by which time he believed that the town would have a population of at least half a million. He accordingly instructed Messrs. Bradshaw & Gass, the architects responsible for the Corporation's scheme, to prepare an alternative plan on a wider and more ambitious scale. This plan, which embodies Leverhulme's own suggestions, shows a large open square behind the Town Hall, flanked on its west side by a Technical School and Education Offices, on the north by a new Sessions House and shops and on the south by an Art Gallery and Theatre. Incorporated in the scheme was a new wide thoroughfare, which he proposed to call "The Causeway," to connect the large square with Queen's Park, and he offered to defray the cost of this road himself if the Council adopted his general plan in place of their own.

"Bolton has now the opportunity to create the finest civic centre there is in the United Kingdom," he wrote to the then Mayor of Bolton, when submitting his proposals. "I have visited most cities in the world, and there is none which has a finer opportunity for town improvements and developments than has Bolton in the year 1924, but if these opportunities are missed, they will only recur—if ever they do recur—at a prohibitive cost for demolition of existing property, and therefore I am pressing this matter, but only for consideration, and I hope not unduly, and certainly not in any way to take up the attitude of a 'butter-in.' Whatever decision yourself and the Corporation may arrive at will be supported by myself without any resentment, should the decision be adverse to the recommendations I am making. . . . Fortunately, the expenditure to lay the foundations for a fine civic centre is not immediately pressing. All that is necessary is to adopt the plan and then to acquire the sites as they can be acquired with the powers the Corporation have, quietly, and at not exceeding their fair commercial value."

The Corporation, after considering the offer, decided that the scheme already approved by the Council fully met the requirements of the town. Whether the citizens of Bolton a century hence will endorse this considered opinion of their predecessors, or sigh for Leverhulme's bolder scheme, time alone will show.

Turning from Bolton to London, it will be remembered that during the War Leverhulme lent "Cedar Lawn," the house adjoining "The Hill," for use as a military hospital. In 1919, when it was no longer needed for this purpose, he offered it to the Queen as temporary quarters for "Queen Mary's Maternity Home." Her Majesty wished to found a maternity home which might not only be a valuable institution in itself, but serve as a model—up-to-date in every way, and yet not expensively elaborate—for other places to copy, and Hampstead appealed to her, not only on account of its invigorating air, but also because its proximity to London would enable her to pay frequent personal visits. On June 7th, 1919, Her Majesty, accompanied by Princess Mary, inspected "Cedar Lawn" and afterwards took afternoon tea at "The Hill" with Lord Leverhulme and his sister. The Queen accepted the offer of "Cedar Lawn" as a temporary expedient, and two years later the problem of a permanent home was solved by Leverhulme offering to give Upper Heath House, which he had purchased in 1916, as a site for the new building. In June 1922 the work of "Queen Mary's Maternity Home," after being carried on for nearly

three years at "Cedar Lawn," was transferred to its new quarters.

The history of Upper Heath House, which was one of the most noted of the old buildings of Hampstead, is an interesting one. Known at one time as the "Upper Flask Tavern," it figures in Richardson's novel *Clarissa Harlowe*, and during the eighteenth century it was the favourite summer meeting-place of the Kit Cat Club, the great society of Whig noblemen and gentlemen founded in the year 1700. In 1809 the property was sold to Thomas Sheppard, who is said to have been the last Member of Parliament to wear a peruke. The story goes that Shelley, one wild and stormy night, found a poor woman near the house suffering from a fit, and implored the occupant to take her in, only to receive a blunt refusal. The poet then carried the woman down to the Vale of Health and found a temporary lodging for her in Leigh Hunt's cottage. After purchasing the house at auction in 1916, Leverhulme lent it for the remainder of the War to the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem as a club for wounded soldiers under the name of "Kitchener House." His plans for the future of Upper Heath House were not finally settled when the opportunity of using the site for Queen Mary's Maternity Home presented itself, but it was in his mind to convert the building either into a museum or refreshment-rooms for people visiting the Heath. As a memento of his association with the Maternity Home the Queen gave to my father a silver rose-bowl, accompanied by the following personally written letter :—

"BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
"*November 22nd*, 1922.

"DEAR LORD LEVERHULME,

"Will you accept the accompanying silver bowl from me as a remembrance of your kindness in presenting me with the site of my charming maternity home ?

"I hope you will often use my present on your dinner table.

"Believe me,
"Yours sincerely,
"MARY R."

A full list of all the societies, institutions and charitable undertakings with which Leverhulme was identified would fill

many pages; three others only will I mention here—The Three Arts Club, The O.P. Club and The Faculty of Arts—because, being connected with the Arts, they particularly appealed to him. The Three Arts Club is an institution especially valued by the younger members of the professions of Painting, Music and the Drama. Leverhulme was elected an auxiliary member in 1915 and opened two exhibitions of works by its members. In 1918 he was invited to be president of the O.P. Club —whether the initials stand for "Old Playgoers" or "Opposite Prompt" seems to be shrouded in the mists of uncertainty—and filled the office for three successive years, a distinction unique in the annals of the Club. In the summer of 1919 he gave a garden-party at "The Hill" to the members of the Club and of the Actors' Association, and the following year a second garden-party was given for the Club.

The Faculty of Arts was founded towards the end of 1921, and was the first organization of its kind to embrace all the creative Arts and to seek to link together those professionally engaged in the various branches of Art. Leverhulme was the first president of the Faculty.

In 1924 he acquired from the Duke of Westminster another historic London mansion—Grosvenor House, Park Lane. The house had long been a centre of charitable and social entertainment, and Leverhulme continued to lend it for the same purposes. It was his intention to build on the site some form of public building to be devoted to the Arts, but what his scheme would have been in detail is unknown. Several years would necessarily have had to elapse before he could have commenced practical operations, but I think his mind was working in the direction of a building which would have formed an Arts centre different in character from any already existing in London. It would probably have comprised a series of galleries, possibly a small permanent collection of pictures and other works of art, and premises to be used as studios and to provide rooms for various societies, such as the Faculty of Arts, in which he was interested. I feel certain, however, that no fixed plan had taken shape in his mind, for, when driving with him past the building only a few days before his last illness, I asked him if he had prepared any definite scheme, and he told me that he had not.

CHAPTER XXXI

HOME LIFE

IN private life my father's tastes were of the simplest. Although there was an air of sumptuousness about his homes, due to the presence of so many works of art, there was not the slightest trace of ostentation, either in his own manner or in the motives which led him to surround himself with valuable belongings. He had few personal indulgences, and when alone his meals were of the plainest. He took a great interest in dietetics, and was fond of experimenting with new systems and methods. At one time he was a vegetarian for some months on end, but, while he always remained a great eater of fruit, he was not by nature a faddist, and he came to the conclusion that in most controversial matters of diet the middle course was the wisest. He gave up smoking, as the reader will remember, soon after he was forty. He never touched coffee, but he was very fond of tea, and at afternoon tea he always had a specially large breakfast cup placed for him. Spirits he never indulged in; champagne and light wines only occasionally, perhaps two or three times a year, and never at public dinners. "I am fond of champagne," he used to say, "but it is not fond of me." His private apartments—his dressing-room and open-air bedroom—were of Spartan simplicity, and in his "sanctum" also the artistic was subordinated to the practical, the room being large and airy, so that he might have two or three secretaries working with him and hold meetings in it. He enjoyed having a few chosen business associates to spend the afternoon with him there, away from the routine and distractions which were inseparable from Lever House.

In his every action one was impressed with his great energy. The expression of his face was constantly changing, as if responding unconsciously to the processes of thought within his brain. Even in the days when his hearing was normal, he was often, unless talking directly with someone, so absorbed in his own thoughts as to be oblivious of conversations and incidents taking

place around him. Concentration of energy was evident in his commonest everyday actions; until the end of his life he ran upstairs two steps at a time. He disliked being helped on with his overcoat, or to have his bag carried for him, lest he should be thought to stand in physical need of such help, though only prompted by politeness. He generally walked with his hands swinging at his side, or clasped behind his back; he took long, even and deliberate strides, almost as if he were stepping out to measure a given distance. His hands and feet were unusually small for a man, and for one of his build he was remarkably light upon his feet. His mouth betokened humour, kindliness and, at the same time, firmness. If at times, when occasion called it forth, there was a look of hardness in his features, it was the hardness of justice, never of mercilessness.

From middle age onwards he made practically no change in the style of his everyday dress. His evening wear was always full evening-dress with a tail-coat, white waistcoat and white tie; nothing would persuade him to adopt the later cult of a dinner jacket and black tie. After he became associated with the Hebrides, he nearly always wore a grey overcoat of Harris or Lewis handwoven tweed. To keep to one standard in details of dress simplified matters and saved his time.

His habit of early rising was often referred to in the Press. Half-past seven was his regular hour for breakfast, and while his guests were not necessarily expected to be down for it, those who were always won a good mark in his estimation. In the latter years of his life he rose at 4.30, and during the last two or three, actually at 4, the night-watchman calling him by means of a loud electric buzzer, operated by a button outside his door. On rising he devoted twenty minutes to physical exercises, a room adjoining his bedroom being equipped with an electric horse and other mechanical contrivances, such as one finds in the gymnasium of an Atlantic liner. At each of his homes he had an open-air bedroom and slept in the open air, his bed sheltered by a glass roof, in all seasons and in all weathers. The first of these bedrooms was built at Thornton Manor in the angle between two sloping roofs. "Fancy, Bill," a workman engaged on its construction was heard to say to one of his mates, "a bloke getting £500 a week regular and sleeping on a roof!"

After he had had a cold bath and finished dressing, a cup of

tea was brought to his sanctum, and, sipping this, he began to attack the multitudinous reports which had reached him from all the ramifications of his business during the course of the preceding day. From soon after 5 until 7.30 he was engaged in reading these reports and writing replies on their margins with his familiar red pencil, or the fountain pen, charged with green ink, which eventually displaced it, and in making notes for the letters which he would have to dictate later in the day. After breakfast, he skimmed the daily paper for not more than ten minutes—often its headlines only—read his morning's mail, and left for the office at 8.30. If he remained at Lever House all day, his lunch was taken in the office and consisted of a cup of tea, two poached eggs or a little cold meat, while if he returned home, his midday meal was almost as simple. After lunch, wherever he was—unless, of course, he had to attend a public luncheon, a form of entertainment which he studiously tried to avoid—he always had a short sleep ; his " forty winks " he used to call it. Fortunately he was able to go to sleep almost anywhere at a moment's notice and to wake up automatically at the required time. His ability to enjoy this short nap in the middle of the day was one of the secrets of his " staying power."

Before the War he was fond of having business dinners on evenings when he was not fulfilling some engagement, but before going out to a public meeting a high tea was his favourite meal. After the War, however, when his hour of rising was at its earliest, he made it an almost invariable rule to dismiss business from his thoughts after returning home at the end of the day. About the year 1920 he became very fond of dancing, and devoted many of his evenings to it. It appealed to him in three ways—as a mild form of exercise, as a means of offering hospitality to his friends, and because it provided him with an atmosphere of youth, light-heartedness and gaiety. He once asked me whether people considered it a little frivolous for a man of his age to indulge in dancing. When I assured him that no such opinion had ever been expressed to me, he said, " Well, the explanation is simply this : I spend the day entirely surrounded by men, and I don't want to spend my evenings also in ponderous conversation with men. I like to have a few young friends about me whom I can chaff. It keeps my mind young, and prevents me from becoming dull and heavy."

During the dinner parties which he gave at "The Hill," and at the "Staff" and "Co-partnership" dinners or lunches which were given when he visited the Overseas Associated Companies, he used to take great delight in rising from time to time, during the course of the meal, to give a series of toasts, most of them of Irish or Lancastrian origin, the most familiar of them being perhaps his "Irish Welcome":—

> "Come in the evening or come in the morning,
> Come when expected or come without warning,
> Thousands of welcomes you'll find here before you
> And the oftener you come the more we'll adore you."

The third line of the Irish original reads "kisses and welcome," the variant being Leverhulme's own judicious alteration! "Our Homes," ran another of the toasts, "the place where we're treated best and grumble most." Another of his favourites was a Lancashire toast, which depended for its effect on being rattled off very quickly:—

> "Here's to us and ourn,
> Here's to you and yourn,
> And if us and ourn
> Meet you and yourn,
> Us and ourn we'll do as well
> for you and yourn
> As you and yourn have done
> for us and ourn."

He always went to bed as early as possible; soon after nine if he was alone. When dancing took place after dinner, it invariably ended at ten, while if the ball-room at "The Hill" were being lent for some charitable purpose—as was often the case—he would dance systematically through the programme, conscientiously choosing a different partner for each dance, until 11, when he would slip off to bed quietly and unnoticed.

No account of my father's private and family life would be complete without a reference to his Christmas house-parties at Thornton Manor. As the house grew in size, so did these gatherings become larger, and on Christmas Day it was seldom that fewer than fifty people—sisters, nephews and nieces, their families, close personal friends, old friends of early days and their families—sat down to Christmas dinner, carried through

with old-time ritual. On Christmas Eve the family, the guests and the domestic staff invariably assembled in the music-room to hear my father read Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, which he knew almost by heart, and considered the finest sermon in the English language. He used to read from a copy of the abridged version which Dickens himself used for his public readings. After Christmas came amateur theatricals. To encourage my enthusiasm in this direction, my father built a stage in the ball-room at Thornton Manor, and starting—almost inevitably—with H. J. Byron's *Our Boys*, thirteen plays in all have been given at Christmas time by an amateur company composed of members of the family and friends, called—the name was my father's own choice—" The Manor Mummers."

His deafness was also one of the causes which led him to entertain so much through the medium of dances, for the enjoyment of general conversation was denied him ; it also made him disinclined to go to the theatre, a fact which he much regretted, for he had been at one time a keen theatre-goer. Especially had this been so in the 'nineties, when his excursions into public life had been mainly local and his evenings in London had been largely at his own disposal. The theatre, however, continued to hold a warm place in his affections, although his visits became less frequent. I doubt if he missed any of the great Irving productions at the Lyceum, and he saw most of the Shakespearean and other plays mounted by Tree at His Majesty's. Tree, by the way, was once his guest at Thornton Manor, when he was playing in Liverpool. When the theatre became less attractive to Leverhulme, owing to his deafness, he found compensation in the cinema, and when a free evening presented itself he was fond of taking his sister, Harriette Lever, who lived with him at " The Hill," to see the popular film of the moment.

In mentioning the stage one recalls the compliment paid by it to the village built by Leverhulme, when in 1912 George Edwardes produced the musical comedy called *The Sunshine Girl* at the Gaiety Theatre, the scene of which was laid in an industrial village unmistakably intended for Port Sunlight. Many people at the time thought that the play was a subtle form of advertisement, inspired and paid for in some way by Lever Brothers. As a matter of fact, neither the firm

NATIVE VILLAGE BUILT BY "LES HUILERIES DU CONGO BELGE" IN THE FLANDRIA AREA

VIEW OF LEVERVILLE—BELGIAN CONGO

nor its Chairman nor anyone connected with the Company was concerned in the venture, and the published announcement of the play's forthcoming production was the first which any of us heard of it. Beyond supplying photographs as a guide to the scene-painter and providing certain "properties" for the opening act, nothing was in any way contributed by Lever Brothers, and the choice of subject had no significance beyond a desire on the part of the promoters to find a new and original setting for a musical comedy.

With so many interests to occupy his mind, it was impossible for my father to be a prolific reader. It was surprising, nevertheless, how much he did read. His library was a large and varied one, especially strong in books dealing with subjects in which he was closely interested—Architecture, Town Planning, Painting, Furniture, the history and development of Tropical Countries, and Industrial problems. If he did not read every important book on these subjects which was published, he, at least, nearly always ordered a copy, skimmed through it and read carefully those parts which particularly interested him. Books on health and physical fitness formed quite a section of their own in his library, and he studied them carefully. Books dealing with scientific research and knowledge, written from a not too highly technical standpoint, also interested him greatly, and during the last two or three years of his life they formed the largest part of his reading. Novels did not, generally speaking, attract him. "I prefer biography, any day, to the best-written novel since the time of Dickens and Thackeray," he once wrote to an American friend. On reflection he would almost certainly have qualified the remark by adding "except your own Mark Twain and O. Henry," for he had an enthusiastic appreciation of these two writers, both of them, like Dickens himself, masters of humorous characterization and great students of human nature. He loved Shakespeare and Dickens above all other authors, and I cannot remember seeing the table beside his bed without a play of Shakespeare or a novel of Dickens upon it, and one or two volumes of Shakespeare always accompanied him on his travels. *King Lear* was his favourite play, and of Dickens's works *David Copperfield* unquestionably ranked first in his estimation. Editions of Dickens, many of them first or early editions, and books relating to Dickens and his illus-

trators, were one of the strongest features of his library. He loved Shakespeare as a philosopher and portrayer of character, rather than as a poet in the technical sense, for poetry, on the whole, did not strongly appeal to him. "I really am blind on music and poetry," he once wrote to a friend; "the whole of my artistic tastes are in colour, representing pictures, porcelain and furniture." "I am afraid that my mentality runs towards mathematics rather than poetry or music," he confessed in another letter. "I rarely forget figures of any importance, and can remember market quotations and prices of goods over a long number of years. I am often distressed with members of Lever Brothers' staff who seem to have no ability to remember figures or prices, but must always refer to a documentary statement; but my strength in this direction, I am afraid, results in my loss in other directions, namely, my failure to appreciate poetry and music." If Wordsworth's definition of poetry as emotion recollected in tranquillity be correct, it may, indirectly, afford another explanation, for in Leverhulme's busy life there were certainly few moments of tranquillity in which to acquire and develop the right state of mind for the full appreciation of the essence as distinct from the subject-matter of poetry.

As a boy, Leverhulme had been brought up in his father's adopted faith; his wife was a Congregationalist also, and belonged to a family whose ancestry showed an unbroken connection with Nonconformity from the earliest days of the Independents at the beginning of the seventeenth century. During the greater part of his life, until his increasing deafness made it impossible for him to hear the average preacher, he was consistent in his attendance at Congregational churches, although he never became, in the technical sense, a Church member. He could not, however, be described as a typical Congregationalist. He saw much that was beautiful in the environment and services of the Church of England, although its emphasis on creed and dogmatic teaching was out of harmony with his mental make-up, and he was exceptionally free from the historical and denominational prejudices which characterize some Free Churchmen. A church, in his opinion, could not be too beautiful or a service too reverent and orderly. The Church of his dreams was Congregational in government, Anglican in architecture, liturgical in its form of service, pastoral and not sacerdotal in its ministry

and—as far as it was in his power to do so—he tried to carry out this ideal in the churches which he built, always taking care not unduly to press upon a congregation anything which would offend even a minority. Religious argument he knew to be the bitterest form of human controversy and seldom to lead anywhere, and he scrupulously avoided it. He welcomed emotional appeal through the eye, provided it did not offend the scruples of any of the worshippers or lead to the glorification of an individual, rather than of the spiritual reality for which a Church stands. He had respect for all sincere forms of belief. His outlook was that of the Theological student at Longfellow's "Wayside Inn," who—

> ". . . . Preached to all men everywhere
> The Gospel of the Golden Rule,
> The new Commandment given to men,
> Thinking the deed and not the creed,
> Would help us in our utmost need."

Into many forms of religious belief he inquired closely. For a time he became interested in Christian Science, but came to the conclusion that, while its underlying principles were sound and efficacious up to a point, it was carried by its devotees far beyond its reasonable limits. He was once persuaded to go to a Christian Science "Healer" for his deafness. "I have had a struggle to attach myself to Christian Science, but have failed," he wrote after a series of seven treatments. "It seems to me that there is more than a germ of truth in your method, but, unfortunately, germs to increase require a proper soil, and I don't appear to be proper soil for their cultivation. I am a 'doubting Thomas,' and I am afraid I shall continue one."

When visiting Australia in 1913 his inquiring mind led him to attend a "Spiritualist" service. "I came away," runs his description of the experience written in a letter to his sisters, "disgusted with the humbug of the whole affair . . . my own feeling is that there is no spirit world about the matter." On the subject of psychical research as distinct from the type of "manifestation" which apparently characterized this service, he kept an open mind, but deprecated any morbid inquiries into such matters on the part of the average person.

Leverhulme had the greatest veneration for the Bible, and

read a brief portion of it every day. He loved it as literature, but, above all, he valued it as a book of practical advice. The teaching of the Bible was not, in his opinion, indispensable because of its sacrosanct character, but because human experience had proved it to be sound. The Sermon on the Mount and the Golden Rule were to him—as his Messel lecture shows—not abstract idealisms, but practical economic laws, as universal in their application as the law of gravitation. He held that a business man, to be permanently successful, could no more ignore these ethical laws with impunity than, say, a motorist could escape from Newton's Laws of Motion. Many of the books in the Old Testament shared in his affection for the New. "If a business man has not read the Book of Proverbs," he once said in the course of an address, "I will never believe that he can be a true, careful, sound and cautious business man." Happiness was the keynote of his religious creed; not the fleeting happiness of self-indulgence, but the abiding happiness of friendship and of service; and he regarded the right conduct of business affairs as the highest form of service. With him morality and business economics were synonymous terms. He was not a Puritan in the narrow sense. Betting and gambling were the indulgences to which he was most bitterly opposed, not in any sanctimonious way, but because, from the standpoint of economics, they were foolish and indefensible. I remember on one occasion, when on a business visit to Bergen in Norway, strolling into the town with two business colleagues, while my father was busy with his correspondence at the hotel. We happened to pass a building where tickets for a State lottery were on sale, and by way of a mild joke, and perhaps rather thoughtlessly, we bought a ticket for my father, costing the equivalent of about threepence. His reception of the intended joke, however, showed how ingrained and deep—deeper even than we had expected—was his dislike of any form of gambling. His distress was not so much that hundreds of thousands were spending their money in this way, but that some few of them would be undergoing the demoralizing experience of possessing fortunes which they had not, in any remote sense of the term, earned.

CHAPTER XXXII

ART

MY father first began "picking up" small *objets d'art* about two years after he was married, buying them in various dealers' shops in Bolton. In the 'seventies there were no "antique shops" as we understand the term, and the only places where old furniture, pictures and china could be found in a town like Bolton was in the local "brokers'" establishments. He hardly regarded himself as a collector in those days, but he was fond of hunting in these shops for such things—invariably old—as he thought would add a note of interest and beauty to his surroundings. He always considered that his career as a serious collector began with the purchase, during his Wigan days, of two figures of a shepherd and shepherdess in eighteenth-century Derby Bisque ware. They are now in one of the rooms at the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight, and below them is a photograph of the drawing-room of his house in Wigan showing the two figures on the mantelpiece. These simple but delicately beautiful pieces seem fittingly to typify many of his tastes as a collector—they are objects for the decoration of a home; they are exquisitely designed and proportioned, bringing the art of the sculptor into play; they have a vein of evident, but quite healthy, sentiment, and, above all, they are essentially English. At first he paid most attention to china, collecting chiefly Crown Derby, Worcester and Dutch delft. He also bought etchings by Cruickshank, Leech and "Phiz," and first editions of books illustrated by them. Later on, when at "Lower House" and "Westcombe," he acquired some examples of old English oak furniture and a few French pieces. He also became interested in bronzes, and began in a modest way to collect Oriental china, thus laying the foundations of his collection of Chinese pottery and porcelain. It was not until he went to Thornton Manor that he began buying pictures on an important scale. In addition to his etchings he had a few modern water-colours and artist proof engravings

and one or two Bartolozzi prints in his earlier homes, but at Thornton he had the wall space for larger pictures. It was at this period that he became a regular visitor at "Christie's" and other sale-rooms, and a season rarely went by without his making at least one purchase at the summer exhibition of the Royal Academy. Pictures by the great Victorians attracted him first, and his earliest important acquisition was "The Nest," painted by Millais in 1887; a little later he bought "Little Speedwell's Darling Blue," one of the best of the series of child studies painted by Millais in his later years. He also secured Millais's "The Black Brunswicker"—more in his pre-Raphaelite manner—of which he was particularly proud. The model for the girl in this picture was Mrs. Perugini—Charles Dickens's favourite daughter Kate. One day, after the painting had been removed to "The Hill," she asked if she might come to look at it again, and out of this visit sprang a valued friendship, kept alive by frequent visits and correspondence. Other interesting purchases belonging to the same period are Lord Leighton's "Fatidica" and "Actæa—The Nymph of the Shore," Dendy Sadler's "The End of the Skein," and Albert Moore's "Silver." All the pictures I have mentioned are now in the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight, except the last named, which has passed into my own possession. Of Old Masters, Leverhulme's first notable purchase was Hoppner's "Lady Elizabeth Howard—Duchess of Rutland," now in the Lady Lever Art Gallery. Although he bought this picture as early as 1897 it is as fine as, if not finer than, any masterpiece of the same period which found its way into his collection in later years. It was lent to the Royal Pavilion at the Paris Exhibition of 1900. He was also very fond of Old English Mezzotints and engravings, and, after the first bungalow at Rivington was built, he began collecting old English needlework pictures. Victorian Gothic soon disappeared from Thornton Manor, and the early alterations and extensions which he made—including an oak-panelled dining-room, a drawing-room in the "Adams" period, and an entrance hall and an inner hall in the period known as "Colonial Adams"—gave him the background for his steadily increasing collection of period furniture, represented at first by some fine sets of Chippendale chairs, a few Sheraton side tables and satinwood cabinets, as well as by a suite of French furniture and some ormolu cabinets of the Louis-Seize period.

It was after he bought "The Hill," Hampstead Heath, however, that his collection began to assume dimensions which entitled it to be considered as of national importance, and it was then that he started buying examples of the Old English water-colour school—perhaps his favourite school of painting—his collection being particularly strong in the works of Turner, David Cox, Constable and de Wint. Leverhulme made most of his purchases either from private dealers or at Christie's. He was frequently to be seen at this historic sale-room before nine in the morning, for he was fond of calling there on his way to the office, so that he could walk round, catalogue in hand, quietly and unnoticed, and mark any items which particularly attracted him. He would then instruct those acting for him—generally Mr. F. W. Fox, of Gooden & Fox, in the case of pictures, and Mr. Frank Partridge or Mr. M. Harris in the case of furniture and porcelain—to bid up to what he considered a fair and reasonable price for anything which had taken his fancy, but if some outstanding masterpiece which strongly appealed to him came on the market he would give his agent almost unlimited authority to secure it. On several occasions he refrained from bidding against others whom he considered, on account of the position they occupied, to have a prior claim, and in most of these cases—at his own express wish—it was never known that he had stood on one side. One instance may be mentioned—that of the late Lord Kitchener. Kitchener, like himself, was a keen collector of Oriental china, and it was at a sale at Christie's, only a short time before the great soldier's death, that Leverhulme discovered that Kitchener had given instructions for a bid to be made for two pieces of Chinese porcelain which he himself wanted to secure. Leverhulme at once withdrew his commission, and they became Kitchener's property. After Kitchener's death they again came under the hammer, when Leverhulme bought them, and they are now in the Art Gallery at Port Sunlight.

Only in three cases of any importance did Leverhulme buy the whole or a substantial part of an existing collection. The first was his purchase in 1905 of the collection of Wedgwood pottery formed by the first Lord Tweedmouth,[1] the second his

[1] Lord Tweedmouth's collection also included many of the original designs in wax by Flaxman. It is of interest to note that Lord Tweedmouth bought these designs from the great Charles Darwin, whose ancestor, Dr. Erasmus Darwin, the poet, had been the medical attendant and personal friend of Josiah Wedgwood.

purchase in 1910 of the last collection of the late James Orrock, R.I., of 48, Bedford Square, and the third his acquisition in 1913 of a selected portion of the Bennett collection of Chinese porcelain. Richard Bennett was, like Leverhulme, a native of Bolton and an insatiable collector. He seems, however, to have taken greater pleasure in collecting than in possessing, for he began by collecting old violins, and, having got together a particularly fine collection, sold it and turned his attention to first editions of rare and early books. This collection he, in turn, sold, and then took up Oriental china. The firm with which he was connected had business relations with China, and, through his agent there, he was fortunate in being able to secure some of the finest examples of Ming and Kang-He at a time when these wonderful treasures were still procurable by those who were on the spot and "knew the ropes." Leverhulme's portion of the Bennett collection is now at the Lady Lever Art Gallery. James Orrock, as well as being a prolific landscape artist, was a noted connoisseur and dealer. He was one of the recognized authorities on Chinese porcelain, and by his writings and lectures did much to make it better known in this country. He was also an expert in old English furniture and pictures, more particularly the early English water-colour school. Forty-eight Bedford Square —an "Adams" house—was a veritable museum of English eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century art. Fine pieces were constantly passing through Orrock's hands, but he bought more extensively than he sold, and the collection which Leverhulme acquired was one of considerable size and great variety, comprising paintings, drawings, furniture, china and silver. Included in it were some hundreds of pictures, mainly in water-colour, by Orrock himself. These paintings, which are pleasing, decorative and competent in technique, without pretending to be masterpieces, Leverhulme, after selecting a few for his own homes, freely distributed over the walls of offices, corridors and dining-halls at Port Sunlight.

During the last fifteen years of his life Leverhulme added to his collection on a prolific scale, for he could seldom resist any fine picture, tapestry or piece of furniture which came his way and could never bring himself to part with anything, however pressing the circumstances or strong the temptation. Early in his career, before the great vogue for Chinese porcelain and the

THE LADY LEVER ART GALLERY, PORT SUNLIGHT

Photo by "Daily Sketch"

extensive collecting of it by American millionaires, he bought from a well-known London dealer a unique set of five blue Kang-He ginger jars in the hawthorn design. A little while later the same dealer offered to buy the jars at many times the price which Leverhulme had paid, but no offer would induce him to part with them. On a later occasion, feeling compelled by certain circumstances, he did sell some works of art to a dealer. When he went to bed that night, however, he could not sleep, and made up his mind that, come what might, he must undo what he had done, so, as early as possible the next morning, he called on the dealer with a cheque made out for 10 per cent. more than the articles in question had been sold for and bought them back again.

Leverhulme was a great patron of modern art as well as a lover of the art of the past. Over a period of many long years he never missed a Royal Academy and seldom a "private view," and he was a regular guest at the annual Royal Academy banquet. After he went to "The Hill" he gave, almost every summer, except during the years of the War, either a luncheon or dinner to Members and Associates of the Royal Academy. Amongst artists he had perhaps a larger number of personal friends than in any other profession, the outstanding ones being the late Edward Onslow Ford, the sculptor, the late Sir Luke Fildes, Sir William Goscombe John, the late Sir Alfred East—a frequent visitor at Rivington, where he painted several pictures and made a number of water-colour sketches—and Sir David Murray, who twice spent his summer holidays as Leverhulme's guest in Lewis. Sir Luke Fildes painted excellent portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Lever about the year 1898. Of more recent portraits of Leverhulme the one generally accepted as being the most faithful likeness is that painted in 1916 by his friend George Hall Neale, and the same artist has been equally successful in a masonic portrait painted a year later for the Lodge at Port Sunlight. On the occasion of Leverhulme's seventieth birthday the directors of Lever Brothers' Associated Companies commissioned the late William Strang, R.A., to paint a presentation portrait which now hangs in the Board Room at Lever House. The last portrait of him is a striking one painted by Philip A. de Laszlo in 1924, which shows him in his Peer's robes.

This reference to Leverhulme's portraits brings me to the

incident connected with the picture by Augustus John, to which excessive publicity was given at the time. In June 1920 Leverhulme commissioned Augustus John to paint his portrait. It was finished at the end of August, and on September 7th he wrote asking for the picture to be sent to "The Bungalow" at Rivington. It was certainly not in his mind to hang it there, for the reason that he reserved the walls of "The Bungalow" almost exclusively for tapestries, needleworks, etchings, engravings and old prints. He had the picture sent there because he was not pleased with it, and he intended, in order to ensure that no one should see it, to put it away in his safe. When he opened the safe, however, he realized that it was split up into partitions, and any idea of rolling up the entire canvas and placing it inside was out of the question, and so, acting on the impulse of the moment, he cut a square, including the head, out of the picture and placed it in the safe. The rest of the picture was left in the packing-case in a corner of the room, and the housekeeper, noticing that the case was marked "returnable," had it nailed up and sent off. On opening it, Augustus John was, not unnaturally, more than surprised, and on September 30th he wrote for an explanation, saying that he proposed to give the matter the widest publicity. On October 4th Leverhulme answered the letter, and expressed distress at the unfortunate blunder which had occurred, at the same time describing, with perfect frankness, what had happened. Augustus John replied that he was glad to know that Leverhulme had no intention of vexing him, but pointed out that it was very annoying to an artist to have his work destroyed. The Press took the matter up with zest, especially that portion of it which loves a "stunt," nor did it rest there. The 5th of November was approaching and, when the day came, the Chelsea Art Students gave further publicity to the affair by introducing it into their customary rag, and news also came of a one-day's strike of artists in Italy as a protest in support of Augustus John.

That this portrait wounded my father deeply there can be little doubt. He spoke to no one about it at the time, and the publicity in the Press was the first which any of us heard about it; indeed, it was not until some time afterwards that I could persuade my father to show his old friend, Jonathan Simpson, and myself the square containing the head. When we did see it

we understood and sympathized with his feelings, as would anyone bound to him by ties of affection.

Shortly after the Augustus John episode came another incident which brought publicity in its wake. In July 1919 Leverhulme commissioned Sir William Orpen to paint a portrait of him in his Mayoral robes for presentation to the Corporation of Bolton. As Orpen was very busy at the time, the picture was not finally sent to Bolton until the end of August 1921; a question then arose as to the price. The picture shows Leverhulme seated in a chair, and the artist held that it was a "full-length" portrait, while Leverhulme considered it to be "three-quarter length." Somehow or other the matter reached the ears of the Press, and several papers, with the Augustus John story fresh in their minds, and thinking they had found another piece of equally good copy, rushed into print before all the relative facts were ascertained. Leverhulme suggested to Orpen that the point should be referred to the arbitration of their mutual friend, Sir David Murray, but Sir David was loath to undertake so delicate a task in the glare of so much publicity. "What business," he asked, "have papers to rush into private affairs thus?" The correspondence between Orpen and Leverhulme makes it clear that throughout the discussions the friendliest spirit existed on both sides. The question of price was in the end amicably settled between them.

Besides being a constant purchaser of modern paintings and sculpture, Leverhulme was a friend and patron of contemporary art in many ways, some of them known only to the individual artists to whom he gave a helping hand. He was always glad to encourage any new home of Art, and as instances of this one may mention his gifts of pictures to places as far away as Vancouver, Sydney and Auckland (New Zealand), as well as to galleries and museums in his own country.

In 1923 Leverhulme gave to the Royal Society of British Sculptors an endowment to provide a medal to be awarded periodically by the Society "for great distinction as a sculptor or for meritorious service in the cause of sculpture." The first trustees were Mr. W. Reynolds-Stephens, the president of the Society, and the late F. W. Pomeroy, R.A. A suggestion was made that the donor himself might, under the second of the two headings, be the first recipient of the medal, since few had done

more in recent years to encourage British sculpture, but he would not consent. In 1917 he gave an endowment to the Royal Academy, supplementing it in 1923 by another of a similar amount to provide—subject to the widow and family of a former Academician having a life interest in the income—a pension fund to be administered by the trustees of the Royal Academy for the benefit of any members over sixty-five years of age whom the trustees might desire to help.

Leverhulme's greatest gift to the cause of Art and the one which, not only on account of its size, but also by reason of its beauty and variety, places his name amongst the great Art lovers and patrons of all countries and all ages, is the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight, and the collection which it houses—the memorial which he raised in gratitude for the lifelong companionship and gracious influence of her whose name it bears. The building—the foundation-stone of which was laid by the King during Their Majesties' visit to Port Sunlight on March 25th, 1913—was completed in 1922, and opened by H.R.H. the Princess Beatrice on December 16th of that year. Its design is in the style of the Classical Renaissance period, the architect being Mr. Segar-Owen, F.R.I.B.A. Standing at the northern end of Port Sunlight's central open space "The Diamond," the gallery, built of Portland stone, covers over an acre of ground, its plan being in the form of a broad-stemmed cross. There are four entrances, one at each end and one at the centre of each of the two sides, all four enriched with Ionic porticoes and approached by broad flights of steps. Within the building at the north and south ends are circular columned sculpture galleries, from which, through two lesser galleries, the large central gallery is approached. On its east side, parallel with this large central hall, is a series of smaller galleries broken midway by a vestibule. The same arrangement is repeated on the west side, except that the greater part of the southern half is devoted to a spacious Masonic Temple, in which hangs a fine set of six Mortlake Tapestries from the designs of Franz Cleyn, illustrating the story of Hero and Leander.

To the contents of the gallery, its pictures, sculpture and tapestries, its furniture, porcelain and pottery, it is impossible to do full justice within the limits of this chapter. The collection represents the work of almost a lifetime, and includes, with a few

exceptions, the finest works of art which were in Leverhulme's possession. As an indication of the quality and character of this gift to the public, it can safely be said that the value of the portion of his collection which he gave to the Lady Lever Art Gallery was three to four times that of the portion which he retained in his private possession. The striking feature of the Lady Lever collection is its essentially British character. Amongst the pictures two by Rubens, "The Daughter of Herodias" and "The Death of Adonis," a "Portrait of a Gentleman" by Rembrandt, "Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante" by Vigée Le-Brun, a small Meissonier, three flower studies by Fantin Latour, a Rosa Bonheur, and some Spanish primitives are the only noticeable exceptions; while in furniture the "Napoleon Room" supplies the only exotic note. In this room are a suite of Empire bedroom furniture, which once belonged to the Empress Josephine, and a set of massive gilt chairs of the same period, which Napoleon gave to Cardinal Fesch with the motive, it has been suggested, of inducing His Eminence to look favourably upon his intended divorce from the ill-starred Empress whose bed they now surround. In the same room are other relics of Napoleon—his field travelling case, a death-mask and a needlework case which belonged to Josephine, as well as busts and pictures associated with the period, including a fine imaginative portrait of the Emperor by W. B. Richmond, R.A., and Sir W. Q. Orchardson's "Napoleon Dictating his Memoirs at St. Helena."

Of British Old Masters the outstanding examples are Sir Joshua Reynolds's "Elizabeth Gunning," "Mrs. Peter Beckford," "Lady Anne Fitzpatrick" and "Mrs. Seaforth and Child"; Romney's "Miss Sarah Rodbard" and "Miss Shakespeare"; Gainsborough's portrait of Princess Augusta Sophia; Hoppner's "Lady Elizabeth Howard—Duchess of Rutland" and "Lord Hastings"; Allan Ramsay's "Dinwiddie Sisters," and several portraits by Sir Thomas Lawrence and Sir Henry Raeburn. The great landscape and genre painters are represented by Gainsborough, Richard Wilson, Crome, Stark, Cotman, Constable, Morland, David Cox, R. P. Bonington, Muller, J. Linnell, J. Holland, Sir Edwin Landseer and William Etty. Few galleries in the country are richer in pre-Raphaelite pictures, the principal ones being Holman Hunt's "The Scapegoat" and "May Morning on Magdalen Tower," Millais's "Sir Isum-

bras at the Ford," " An Idyll of 1745 " and " Lingering Autumn." Rossetti's " The Blessed Damozel " (one of his several versions of this subject) and " Sibylla Palmifera," and Ford Madox Brown's " Cromwell on his Farm." In the main gallery Millais can be seen in all his moods and periods, as pre-Raphaelite in " Sir Isumbras " and " The Black Brunswicker," as an historical painter in " An Idyll of 1745," as a landscape artist in " Lingering Autumn," as a portraitist in his fine painting of " Alfred Lord Tennyson," and as a painter of children in " The Nest " and " Little Speedwell's Darling Blue." Indeed, there could hardly be a finer opportunity of studying, within the compass of a single room, the full range of Millais's powers. Lord Leighton is represented by his superb " The Garden of the Hesperides " and " The Daphnephoria " (which fills almost the whole of the north wall of the main gallery), and Burne-Jones by " The Annunciation," " The Beguiling of Merlin " and " The Tree of Forgiveness."

Of other artists' work G. F. Watts's " Una and the Red Cross Knight," Fred Walker's " The Bathers," Orchardson's " The Young Duke," Herkomer's " The Last Muster," Briton Rivière's " Fidelity," Sir Luke Fildes's " An Alfresco Toilet," Solomon J. Solomon's " The Judgment of Paris," Edgar Bundy's " Finance," and " The Magic Crystal," by Sir Frank Dicksee, P.R.A., attract the most attention.

The old English water-colour school is represented at Port Sunlight by many examples of its greatest masters, including Paul Sandby, George Barret, David Cox, John Varley, Turner, de Wint, Copley Fielding, Cattermole, William Hunt and Tom Collier. The Turners should be specially mentioned, for they include, amongst others, his " Lancaster " and his " Bolton Abbey "—beloved of Ruskin.

The last important work which Leverhulme secured for the gallery was Sargent's " On His Holidays," from the McCulloch collection ; the picture shows Alexander, the son of Mr. George McCulloch, resting on the bank of a salmon stream, his catch, rod and landing-net beside him. Leverhulme was delighted when he obtained this painting—his only Sargent—and no picture in the gallery gave him greater pleasure. In writing of it, I recall an amusing story. A new commissionaire had been appointed at the gallery about the time the picture was purchased. At

dinner one evening, a little while afterwards, Leverhulme turned to the guest sitting next to him and asked, "What do you think of my new Sargent at the Art Gallery?" "I have not seen him yet," the guest replied, "but I think it's a splendid idea to give these jobs to ex-Service men."

In addition to the Mortlake Tapestries in the Masonic Temple there are several good examples from the looms of Flanders and Brussels, as well as five exceptionally fine Gobelin Tapestries. There are also many English needlework pictures from examples of the Elizabethan period down to one worked by the donor's mother—Eliza Hesketh—in 1829.

British sculpture is represented in the south rotunda by works by Sir Francis Chantrey, Edward Onslow Ford (including his busts of Mr. and Mrs. Lever and of James Lever), Sir William Goscombe John (whose bust of Lady Lever preserves for us a wonderfully lifelike and sympathetic likeness), W. Reynolds-Stephens, Bertram MacKennal, Derwent Wood and F. W. Pomeroy. The north rotunda is devoted to sculpture of earlier periods.

The Chinese pottery and porcelain and the "Tweedmouth Collection" of Wedgwood have been referred to earlier in this chapter. Although inevitably eclipsed by these two unique collections, there are also examples at the gallery of Sèvres and of Derby, Chelsea-Derby, Liverpool, Leeds and Lowestoft wares.

The furniture is nearly all English, and covers all the styles from Tudor and Stuart to Sheraton and Hepplewhite. Leverhulme, who arranged the whole collection himself, devoting many long and happy hours to the task, took particular care to observe in the individual rooms as much chronological accuracy as possible. There are four special English "period rooms," one with Tudor oak panelling from Lamborne Hall Farm in Essex dated 1571, a second, also panelled in oak, of the William and Mary period, forms an excellent background for contemporary furniture. The third, usually referred to as the "Queen Anne Room," is more strictly speaking in the style of William Kent, the panelling being from a house near Chatham. In the fourth room the "Adams" period is illustrated, the plaster-work on the walls being reproduced from the original work of the brothers Adam in the Music Room at Harewood House, Yorkshire. This room was only completed a few weeks before my father's death,

and the last recollection I have of him in the gallery is when he stood in this room, during his last visit there, telling the craftsman who was carrying out the work to tone down the rich " Wedgwood " blue of the walls until the right degree of mellowness was reached. In these matters his eye was unerring.

The gallery is open free of charge to the public during week-days and on Sunday afternoons, while in the evenings its main hall is often the scene of village gatherings and dances, for it was my father's wish that it should be not merely an art gallery or museum in the formal sense, but also a " home " to which people might come for inspiration and, on appropriate occasions, for recreation and entertainment.

Leverhulme's feelings with regard to Art were well expressed in his speech at the opening of the gallery.

" Art," he said, " has always been to me a stimulating influence ; it has always taught me without upbraiding me ; elevated me without humbling me ; and appealed to me because of this fact, that only the best and truest in art survives. The poor Art of the effortless artist floats down the stream into the ocean of oblivion and is forgotten. Art tells us that it is only the true and honest work of life that will survive, and, therefore, Art can be to everyone an inspiration. It is within the reach of all of us, however humble we may be, for with modern inventions and the genius of printers' reproductions all the finest works of art are within the reach of all, and a visit to the art galleries in our large centres will take us to the originals.

" Another object I had in view in establishing this Gallery was to show that English Art throughout the centuries had not been second to the art of any nation in the world. We British are sometimes too fond of depreciating ourselves, but I venture to say that if you will look at the last two centuries you will find that English Art—the Art of the home, not of the palace—transcends in beauty of outline, form and colour that of any of our neighbours, however famous they may be."

Map showing the Home & Overseas Associated Companies works and plantations of Lever Brothers Limited at the beginning of 1925.

CHAPTER XXXIII

HOMES, GARDENS AND ESTATES

AFTER his marriage, my father lived in thirteen houses and, with the exception of the one in Palmyra Square, Warrington, he built, rebuilt or, to some extent, altered all of them. My mother used to say that she seldom experienced the sensation of living for very long in a house free from the presence of workmen. Planning, building, altering and enlarging were amongst my father's favourite pastimes. To envision possibilities, to transfer his ideas to paper, to watch them—under the practised hand of the architect of his choice—take definite shape and finally, through the medium of builder, mason or gardener, become material realities, was his most absorbing recreation. The pleasure to be found in a finished house and garden was small compared with the joy of creating them, and it would be true to say that during the last thirty-five years of his life he never lived in a finally completed home. Plans for some future extension were invariably on his desk or, at any rate, taking shape in his mind.

I have mentioned his early alterations to Thornton Manor; they were the first of a long succession, and, to-day, the few existing fragments of the original structure are hard to trace. He loved large rooms where he could entertain *en masse* and in which he could walk up and down, and the music-room at Thornton was the first which he built. When indulging in concentrated thought or talking with a friend, he liked to walk to and fro along a straight and level garden-path or up and down a conveniently large room. This accompaniment of thought by physical movement seemed to reflect his trend of mind—dynamic, not static. The Latin proverb *solvitur ambulando* might with literal accuracy have been applied to hundreds of the problems connected with the history of Lever Brothers and its founder. Looking back upon the most memorable conversations which I have had with him—those intimate and companionable talks between father and son which remain indelibly engraven on the

mind—I see as their setting the garden at Thornton, the terrace at "The Hill," the verandah at "The Bungalow," or the deck of a ship; they are associated with movement, not with rest.

His last additions to Thornton Manor were finished in 1914 and almost completed the metamorphosis of its architecture from Victorian Gothic to Tudor and Elizabethan. Had the War not intervened, the transformation would most probably have been finally accomplished, for the architect—Mr. J. L. Simpson—had drawings ready for two further wings, as well as a new façade to an older portion of the house, and these, together with an arched entrance lodge—in the manner of the one at Stokesay Castle, near Ludlow—built a few years earlier, would have formed a spacious "half-timber" quadrangle or entrance court, of a pattern characteristic of many Elizabethan manor-houses.

Although Leverhulme enlisted the help of others, notably his friend Thomas H. Mawson, the leading landscape architect and town planning authority of his day, the general lay-out of all his gardens may be said to have been his own. He looked upon his two-acre kitchen garden at Thornton as perhaps his best piece of planning and the circular rose garden near to it as one of his happiest conceptions. Mawson once paid the latter a gracious tribute by saying that he wished he had himself designed it. It was the fact that each was bent on making Nonconformist places of worship more beautiful that first brought Mawson and my father together. The former was anxious to erect in the small Congregational church which he attended at Hest Bank, near Lancaster, a carved screen, and when inviting subscriptions he wrote to my father, whom he had not hitherto met and upon whom he confessed to having not the slightest claim, except that they were both regarded as "High Church Nonconformists"—an unusual phrase and one having in this case an æsthetic rather than a dogmatic interpretation. A contribution was duly sent, accompanied by my father's best wishes and an invitation to Mawson to visit Thornton Manor and advise him upon the improvement of its garden. The voluminous correspondence which passed between them throws an interesting light on their characteristics. It was an effective combination, for the one was complementary to the other. In Mawson one saw the idealist, the seer of visions, the brilliant craftsman; in Leverhulme the realist, the organizer and the planner; while imagination and

artistic courage were traits common to both. "My successes when working with yourself," Mawson wrote in one of his letters, "have often resulted from your own daring initiative in tackling problems in a big masterful way." Leverhulme's love of straight and level walks is referred to in one of his early letters to Mawson, which deals with some garden work then in progress at Thornton.

"I suppose," the letter runs, "that everyone makes his garden to suit his own requirements. I am afraid I do not want a garden so much for rest as for promenades and walks. I have tried sitting down in the retreats and garden shelters, but I cannot rest in them two minutes, but on the contrary, I can walk about for a couple of hours at a time along the long stretch of walk I have made in the centre. . . . One central feature is easily carried in mind and easily walked round, but a number of them, and a number of breaks and levels, I find to be irritating and annoying. This desire on my part to arrange promenades will explain a good deal of the planning I have done at Thornton, and that I am not alone in this ideal I am confident from the number of gardens I have visited where similar walks have been arranged by previous owners."

Leverhulme had always been a lover of ferns, and soon after he went to Thornton he built a fernery there, in which, amongst other interesting tropical plants, are two flourishing banana-trees. Down the centre is a series of small pools for goldfish, the upper pool being replenished—on the turning of a tap—by a miniature cascade sparkling and bubbling over fern-clad slabs of rock. Ferns and ferneries form the subject of another letter to Mawson:

"I had no idea that the love of ferns entitled a man to the jaw-breaking title 'Pteropodist.' I have always been a lover of ferns; I made a wardian case, as they were called, when I was a boy of nine or ten years of age. Then I built a fernery out of old bacon boxes in the back-yard of No. 1, Park Street, Bolton, the house where my wife and I lived when we were first married. I covered the inside with virgin cork and had ferns growing luxuriously. When I moved to Wigan I made a rather more pretentious fernery, built in brick with tufa rock work. I feel now that I must have been a Pteropodist all my life without knowing it, like the man who found he had been speaking prose all his life without being aware of the fact."

I must not leave the subject of Thornton Manor without a brief reference to the artificial lake which Leverhulme made there. It took several years to make and was begun about the year 1905. Starting with two small pits situated in the middle

of a wood and fed by a narrow brook, amounting in a dry summer to little more than a trickle, he excavated through the heart of the wood a long straight canal, making at one end a bathing-pool surrounded by a stone pavement. Standing at this end of the canal and looking up the straight waterway, which is flanked on each side first by a grassy margin, then by clumps of rhododendrons—a riot of colour in early summer—and finally by the tall trees of the wood, one sees in the centre of the vista and beyond the intervening "park" the red sandstone buildings of the house itself. After the canal was finished, Leverhulme made two further extensions to the lake, one a lagoon with a solitary island in the centre, and the other an expanse of water, about the same size as the lagoon, dotted with a number of small islands planted with trees and rhododendrons. The lake, which, apart from the bathing-pool, is three feet deep all over, is the home of black and white swans and many interesting water-fowl, including Muscovy-ducks, barnacle geese, and several other varieties. It is a favourite haunt of herons, and sometimes as many as half a dozen may be seen flying majestically above its waters. Leverhulme was a great lover of bird life, and all his gardens were plentifully supplied with nesting-boxes. It may, indeed, be a surprise to some to know that from the year 1910, when the first pair of swallows nested in his newly constructed open-air bedroom at Thornton, he kept every summer a carefully written record of his observations, showing when the swallows arrived, when they built their nest, the number of eggs and when the young were hatched, when the fledglings first left the nest and when the birds finally migrated. The shooting of water-hens on the lake was strictly forbidden, but he encouraged a plentiful supply of wild-duck to provide sport for his friends. The rearing of wild-duck on private waters is far from inexpensive, and he used jocularly to describe a duck shoot on his lake as "Up goes ten shillings, bang goes twopence, and down comes half a crown!"

Leverhulme bought "The Hill," his home at Hampstead, in 1904. The house had formerly been the home of the Hoare family. The first Samuel Hoare, the banker, lived at "Heath Mount"—now the residence of Lord Iveagh—the square Georgian house which stands at the corner where the main road from London, after passing the Round Pond, branches into the

Spaniards Road on the right and into the North End Road on the left. It is on the latter road, some two or three hundred yards beyond "Jack Straw's Castle," that "The Hill" is situated. Samuel Hoare bought the original "Hill House," as it was then called, as a home for his son, the second Samuel Hoare, on his marriage in 1809 to one of the Gurneys of Norfolk. To successive generations of the family, especially to John Gurney Hoare, who died in 1875, the public stands indebted for the protection and preservation of a great deal of that free and open Heath which is to-day one of London's greatest assets. When Leverhulme bought the house it was comparatively new, having been rebuilt in the 'nineties, but it goes almost without saying that he carried out a few alterations before actually taking up his residence there. Soon afterwards he enlarged the house by adding two wings at right angles to the main portion, the one forming a large music-room in the style of the late seventeenth century, with panelling of unpolished American walnut, the other a series of small picture galleries terminating in an oak panelled room of the Stuart period. In front of the house there was originally a lawn which sloped down to the level of the lower Heath; this he altered as form two level lawns separated by a paved terrace and steep bank, broken mid-way by two curved flights of stone steps. Across the centre of the lower lawn he made a lily pond, in which were square and diamond-shaped stepping-stones and the sculptured figure of a boy struggling with a dolphin—the work of the late Derwent Wood, R.A. In excavating and levelling the lawns, precautions were successfully taken to preserve several fine old elm-trees, chestnuts and copper beeches. Round two sides of the garden, and facing the open Heath, Leverhulme made a columned pergola, which occasioned a certain amount of excitement when it was newly built. Before time had begun to mellow the brick and stone work, and the rambling roses and clematis had covered the wooden espaliers between the plain Doric columns, the pergola as seen from the Heath did perhaps strike a somewhat startling note; but it is difficult to see how the new and higher levels of lawn could have been made as reasonably private except by means of a plain wall or fence, which would not only have altered the appearance of that part of the Heath, but definitely disfigured it. The grounds at "The Hill" made an ideal setting for garden-

parties and fêtes, and nearly every Saturday during the summer they were lent for these purposes to various institutions and charities, while on several occasions the lawns and terraces became a stage for pastoral plays and exhibitions of rhythmic dancing.

In 1911, after his friend, the late Sydney Gross, had left the neighbouring house, "Heath Lodge," Leverhulme bought it, pulled it down, and added its grounds to the garden of "The Hill." To link the two gardens together he had to build a stone bridge across a narrow intervening public footpath. On the "Heath Lodge" side of this bridge he built another length of pergola and at the end of it a garden pavilion—belvedere is perhaps the right word—from which one may obtain magnificent views, such as Constable loved to paint, of the surrounding heath and the open country beyond stretching away to Harrow-on-the-Hill. Windsor Castle is visible from this vantage point on clear days. An elaborate scheme, in the manner of the great Italian gardens, was embarked upon in the "Heath Lodge" part of the garden, but the War interrupted the work and it was never completed. In 1914 Leverhulme bought the neighbouring house on the other side of "The Hill," "Cedar Lawn," so called on account of several magnificent cedars which adorn the garden. It was his intention to pull "Cedar Lawn" down and add the grounds to his own, but the War postponed this plan also. Before passing from the gardens of "The Hill" to the house itself, mention may be made of the public right-of-way dividing the original grounds from those of "Heath Lodge" and Leverhulme's negotiations with the Hampstead Borough Council to secure this strip of land in exchange for "The Paddock," a small enclosure on the opposite side of the North End Road, for the proposal gave rise to a certain amount of controversy and was dragged into the arena of local party politics. It is only right that the greatest vigilance should be exercised with regard to any proposals affecting common lands and public rights-of-way, but in this case the community was being offered considerably more land than it was being asked to give up and, as far as value was concerned, there was no comparison, "The Paddock" being a highly eligible building site. These facts, however, were carefully obscured by those who wished to suggest, for political ends, that Leverhulme's proposals were an attempt on the part of a capitalist to

encroach on the free and open spaces of the Heath.[1] The exchange was ultimately agreed to, but Leverhulme's death occurred before the legal formalities were carried through.

At "The Hill" many styles and periods of decoration are represented—Elizabethan, Stuart, late seventeenth century, early Georgian and Adams. As far as individual rooms were concerned, Leverhulme was a purist, holding that the decoration, the pictures, the furniture and the appointments should be consistent with the period represented; but he liked to have rooms of different periods in the same house, so long as its external architecture was kept true to one type; hence within the "Tudor" walls of Thornton Manor we find rooms fashioned in the "Adams" style as well as a typically French drawing-room panelled in cedar, while behind the Georgian exterior of "The Hill" are several rooms of earlier periods. Leverhulme's views on this matter were in conflict with the opinions of several of his architect friends, who quarrelled with his policy of mixing styles. There is an interesting reference to the subject in a letter written to Thomas H. Mawson in 1910.

"I feel," the letter runs, "that in the course of centuries we have gradually gained experience in the type of architecture suitable for each room. For instance, I prefer Georgian dining-rooms as the rooms in which to give large dinners; for small dining-rooms I prefer Tudor. For drawing-rooms I prefer what is called the Adams style; for entrance halls the Georgian. For a large room, such as a music-room, I prefer the period which I should call the Inigo Jones type of Renaissance."

Two years before his death Leverhulme added a ball-room to "The Hill" and he contrived to fit it in without making any noticeable addition to the outside of the house, although it was one of the largest private ball-rooms in London, measuring about 140 feet by 27 feet. He built it underneath the verandah which ran the full length of the west side of the house, and which had to be slightly increased in width for the purpose. Few people would ever have thought of building a large room in such a position, and it is perhaps the best illustration of his originality and ingenuity in planning. His last extension to "The Hill" was an enlargement of the south wing to form a gallery for modern pictures, with a smaller room for water colours adjoining it, and

[1] "The Paddock" was bought by public subscription from the executors of Lord Leverhulme after his death and added to the Heath.

also a gallery for sculpture. It was finished only a few weeks before his death.

It has been said—and one can understand the point of view—that Leverhulme furnished his rooms to be looked at rather than lived in. He would not have in any room furniture that was not in correct harmony with its architectural treatment. The soft divan, the be-cushioned sofa, the ample easy chair in which one can be "lost in slothful ease," found no place in his entertaining rooms, because they would have been an intrusion of the modern upon the old. His eye was not as sensitive to colour as to form. Window curtains and wall papers he kept plain and unobtrusive, and did not attempt to make them play a prominent part in the decorative scheme of a room, but in the arrangement of pictures and furniture he had an unerring eye for balance and symmetry. His one fault, perhaps, was a tendency to overcrowd; his rooms were too full of furniture and his walls of pictures, which often overlapped the moulding of panels, or intruded upon pilasters and other architectural features never intended for such treatment. The reason for these acts of trespass lay in the fact that the size of his collection was always ahead of the accommodation at his disposal. The final extent of his collection of furniture and pictures may be gauged by the fact that, at the time of his death, not only was the Lady Lever Art Gallery more than amply filled as well as all the rooms at "The Hill," "The Bungalow" and Borve Lodge, but that it was also found possible, from the balance, to furnish the new galleries at "The Hill," while even then the cellars at Hampstead and the basement of the Art Gallery were stocked with what remained. The loan collection at the Rivington Hall Museum, referred to in an earlier chapter, still further swelled the total volume. Under these circumstances, overcrowding was a temptation from which it was difficult to escape.

We must now turn to "The Bungalow," at Rivington. A few years before his death Leverhulme added to the house a circular ball-room, with spacious fireside alcoves, and a minstrels' gallery over the main entrance. In his youth he had been fond of dancing, and after the War—as already mentioned—he enjoyed the pleasant diversion and mild form of exercise afforded by the less strenuous steps which had become the fashion. This rediscovery, on his part, of the pleasures of dancing led to the building of the two most strikingly original rooms which he

MR. AND MRS. LEVER AND THEIR SON IN 1905

Photo by J. George Davies

planned—the long, underground ball-room at "The Hill" and the circular one at Rivington.

Beautiful as are the grounds at "The Hill" and Thornton Manor, the gardens belonging to "The Bungalow" may justly claim to be Leverhulme's *chef-d'œuvre* in garden-making. The two former represent the alteration and enlargement of gardens already in existence, but at Rivington he started with a stretch of the virgin, heather-clad slopes of Rivington Pike, and converted it into a garden of great variety, novelty and charm, the local grey stone, found below the surface, lending itself, most fortuitously, to the making of rocky pools and lakes, crazy-paved pathways, caves and grottos, terraces, garden shelters, and pigeon-cotes. The gardens took many years to make and entailed a great deal of labour. About a hundred feet below "The Bungalow" were two spacious level lawns. I say "were" because one of them, at the time of my father's death, was being excavated for the purpose of making a lake. Farther down the slope he built a realistic Japanese garden and lake, with shelters fashioned like Japanese tea-houses, stone lanterns, and other Japanese garden ornaments. An illustration of this garden is given, and looking at it, the reader will find it difficult to believe that the scene is not in Japan itself; whereas, if one stands on the spot from which this photograph was taken and turns about, one surveys a panorama of Lancashire coal-mines, factories and cotton-mills. In the woods below the Japanese garden my father constructed a series of artificial waterfalls, regulated by means of a valve controlling the outlet from the Japanese lake, which is itself fed by a stream which runs down the slopes of the Pike. Had the second lake, mentioned above, been completed, the head of water would have been still further increased. Leading from the Japanese garden is a short curved path with high ground on either side. "It must have been a big task to cut that path through the little hill," suggested a friend whom my father was one day showing round the gardens. My father smiled and explained that, as a matter of fact, he had made the path first and then built up the hills on either side of it! My description of the Rivington gardens would not be complete without a reference to the stone bridge, spanning one of the main roads and connecting the grounds of "The Bungalow" with the woods below, for this bridge was not only planned, but entirely designed by Leverhulme. The style, as

will be seen from the illustration, is suggestive of a Roman viaduct. He was always very proud of it, and it is a matter of great regret that his original sketch was destroyed when the first bungalow was burnt.

At Lews Castle, beyond converting the sloping kitchen garden which he found there into one with a series of level terraces and throwing two rooms into one to form a large ball-room, Leverhulme did not effect many changes. His road-making in the island is referred to elsewhere. At Borve Lodge in Harris, which became his Scottish home after the breakdown of his schemes in Lewis and his gift of the Castle to the town of Stornoway, he planned a circular kitchen garden, surrounded by a stone wall, but, alas, he never lived to see it completed. I must also mention that he removed a substantial hillock standing between the Lodge and the shore, to give an uninterrupted view of the sea and the Island of Taransay in the distance.

From Leverhulme's homes and gardens we must pass to his estates in Cheshire, in which county he became a large landowner. In 1911 he purchased from the late Earl of Shrewsbury the Raby, Brimstage and Barnston Estates, amounting to nearly four thousand acres, and shortly afterwards he bought from the late Sir Thomas Brocklebank the Storeton Estate, of fourteen hundred acres, while a few years later he acquired the Arrowe Estate. All these estates are in the Wirral Peninsula and, together with the Lymm Estate, to which I shall have occasion to refer later, they brought the total area of land which he owned in Cheshire to approximately eight thousand acres.

He had for a long time been an advocate of the policy that towns should acquire agricultural land on their borders as opportunities arose, so that, as they expanded, they might control the development of their boundaries. In 1913, in order that the theory might be put into practice, he offered to the Corporation of Birkenhead the Storeton portion of his Wirral Estate at the price he had paid for it together with the cost of the permanent improvements which he had carried out. While there were many who were anxious that the offer should be accepted, there was a leavening of opinion opposed to the purchase on account of the expenditure which it would have involved, and a spirited controversy ensued. It was brought to an untimely end, however, by the refusal of the Board of Trade to sanction the necessary loan.

In buying his estates in Wirral, Leverhulme was looking a long way ahead; he foresaw clearly that the Peninsula would become more and more a residential area, and he wished to have the power and opportunity to mould into a well-planned whole that part of it which was more immediately ripe for development. He had a passion for wide and straight roads, and he lost no time in making through the heart of the land which he had acquired an arterial highway from Prenton (on the outskirts of Birkenhead) through the villages of Little Storeton and Brimstage to Thornton Hough, a distance of three and a half miles. The road has three carriage-ways, the centre one being intended for fast traffic and the two outer ones for slow traffic. The middle roadway was finished and macadamed along its entire length and the two side roads, divided from the middle road by narrow grass verges planted with trees, were excavated in readiness for the macadam when required. Trees were also planted along the outer margins, so that one day when the roads are finally completed they will lie through three fine avenues with four lines of trees, including elms, poplars and sycamores. Cutting this highway at right angles at a point called "The Circle," Leverhulme made a private drive leading to the entrance lodge of Thornton Manor. The story goes that when a tentative plan for this new drive was placed before him, showing a certain number of curves, so that the contours of the land might offer less resistance, he took a ruler and, placing one end on Thornton Manor, pointed the other to Port Sunlight and drew a straight line, saying, "That is how the road must go." The drive certainly does run in a direct line towards the Works' chimneys, and, by providing a shorter and uninterrupted run, enabled him to reach his office in about half the usual time, thus saving many valuable hours in the course of a year. As a means of opening up that part of the estate through which it runs, the new arterial road from Prenton to Thornton Hough was ahead of its time, but it was of great potential benefit to the public, being a link between two important and crowded highways, as well as a means of avoiding several awkward corners and bends. Soon after it was made the road was offered as a gift to the Wirral Rural District Council, but was not accepted. In the meantime it remains a practical illustration of the lines on which Leverhulme believed that a great highway should be made.

In the same year in which he purchased the Shrewsbury

and Brocklebank Estates in Wirral, Leverhulme acquired from the Dewhurst family the Oughtrington and Beechwood Estates at Lymm in Cheshire. These estates, extending to some seventeen hundred acres, included about four hundred acres of salt land, and his object in buying them was to enable Lever Brothers to have access to their own salt supplies in case they should in the future decide to manufacture their own soda ash. At the end of that year, 1911, the Lymm Estates, with the exception of the salt lands and a small portion reserved for building developments, were offered for sale, and eventually the salt lands were sold to Messrs. Brunner, Mond & Co. Leverhulme decided to lay out the profit accruing from this sale in furthering the development of his remaining land at Lymm, and with this in view, he built a handsome bridge in ferro-concrete across the neck of water at the western end of the Lymm lake and made a road from the main Warrington–Altrincham road round by the lake to the bridge, running from there into a thoroughfare called Cherry Lane, thus cutting out a steep and dangerous hill below Lymm Church. Two large houses came into Leverhulme's possession through his purchase of the Lymm Estate—Oughtrington Hall and Beechwood Hall, both former residences of the Dewhurst family. During the early part of the War they were used as homes for Belgian refugees and afterwards were frequently lent for various charitable purposes. The advowson of Oughtrington Parish Church was also included in his purchase, but he presented it to the then Bishop of Chester and his successors.

CHAPTER XXXIV

LAST JOURNEYS

TO appreciate the range and diversity of my father's activities during the last eight years of his life it must be borne in mind that the undertakings mentioned in Chapter XXVII were concurrent with the developments in Lewis and Harris, and his remarkable energy and capacity for work will be further appreciated when I add that, during the same period, he made more journeys abroad than at any other time of his life. Except for brief visits to France and Holland, he had been unable, during the War, to see any of the overseas branches of Lever Brothers, and he was naturally anxious to make up for lost time. He went to the United States and Canada four or five times after the War, to Scandinavia three times, and to South Africa once. He also paid many visits to France and Belgium and other countries on the Continent. In the winter of 1923–4 he made his fifth journey round the world, and the following winter he was away for five months in the Belgian Congo, Nigeria, and other parts of West Africa.

On these journeys abroad he invariably took a number of people with him, his entourage often including as many as ten or a dozen, for, in addition to a personal secretary and the directors or other senior officials immediately concerned with the companies he was visiting, one or two of his other colleagues would often accompany him. He also made a practice of taking with him, from time to time, some of the younger men in the firm, not only to enlarge their vision and knowledge of the business, but so that he might study their characters and abilities, for he always held that there was no better way of getting to know a man thoroughly than to travel with him. On a journey every moment of Leverhulme's time was occupied. Every morning on board ship he used to hold conferences with those who were accompanying him, and he generally took away with him one or two problems to which, in the quietude of his state-room, he could give concentrated and undisturbed attention.

On railway journeys every minute was plotted out to advantage, and very often he would take with him on the train the officials of the company he had just visited, so that he might have a final discussion with them. They would leave the train at some convenient point, where he would be joined by the representatives of the company he was about to visit. Preliminary conferences would then be held, so that his time might be saved when he reached his destination. I have known him, during a Continental journey, when his time has been limited, to transact a morning's business during the course of a motor run. Two cars would be engaged, and he and his colleagues would ride in one while those whom he wished to interview would follow in the other; from time to time a halt would be made; the person with whom he had been talking would leave the car and another would take his place, and this would be repeated every few miles until all the matters under consideration had been dealt with.

Whenever he visited an overseas associated company Leverhulme invariably arranged for some form of social gathering to be held, so that he might have an opportunity of meeting in an informal way those engaged in the local business, and of speaking to them upon the principles of Co-partnership and on kindred subjects. These gatherings usually took the form of a "high tea" or dinner, followed by Leverhulme's address, a few other speeches, and then a dance.

His first visit to America and Canada after the War was in the autumn of 1919. He had not been in the United States since 1913, and in the intervening six years his name and the world-wide reputation of the business of which he was the head had loomed larger in the eyes of the public. His career appealed strongly to the American imagination and temperament, and he had become what the journalist calls "good copy." It is no exaggeration to say, therefore, that during this visit he was besieged by reporters and interviewers from the time he landed at New York until he returned to England. He had been invited to a luncheon on the day after his arrival, at which he was to meet some thirty of the leading bankers and business men of New York. His steamer was a day late; but with characteristic enterprise he chartered a tug to meet him at the quarantine station, and he was just in the nick of time, arriving

a moment or two after the guests had assembled. No people in the world enjoy speech-making more than the Americans, and from the day of his arrival Leverhulme was bombarded with invitations to attend luncheons and dinners and to address meetings and conventions up and down the country. Although the claims of business made it imperative to decline in nearly every case, he was able in Boston—where the greater part of his time was spent—to accept a few invitations of a public character, one being to a luncheon at the Copley Plaza Hotel, at which he delivered an address to more than a thousand representative business and professional men of the city. While in Boston he also attended a dinner given in his honour at the Union Club, and in his speech he spoke of the ideals uniting America and England, incidentally assuring his hearers of Great Britain's ability to bear the financial burden that the War had placed upon her. In speeches of this kind he never took the line of least resistance, but always gave candid, and at the same time tactful, expression to the views he held, even though they might not be shared by the majority of his audience; on this occasion he referred to the Protectionist policy of America and pointed out how, in his opinion, it prevented the United States from being a maritime nation of the first order. Seated on his right at this dinner was Calvin Coolidge, the present President of the United States and at that time Governor of the State of Massachusetts. When asked at the end of the evening what impression he had formed of Leverhulme, Mr. Coolidge replied, with characteristic brevity, "A great man."

This visit to America was not confined entirely to the business of Lever Brothers, for Leverhulme took the opportunity, accompanied by Mr. Angus Watson, of studying in Boston, San Francisco and Vancouver the conditions existing in the fishing and fish preserving industries on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. In San Francisco an incident occurred which illustrates his exceptional knack of judging the dimensions of streets and buildings. He was introduced to the Mayor, who took him for a drive to see the sights and beauties of the city. As they were going down Market Street, the principal business thoroughfare, which is over three miles long, Leverhulme asked how wide the street was. He was told is was 130 feet. "Oh," he replied, "I had been thinking it would be 120 feet." "Well," said the

Mayor, "I'm not perfectly certain. We'll look it up when we get back to the City Hall." On their return the blue prints were sent for and Leverhulme's estimate of 120 feet proved to be the exact width.

He was in America and Canada again in the following year and also in 1922, when, during his visit to New York, he was invited to lunch by Mr. John D. Rockefeller. The following is my father's account, taken from a letter which he wrote to a friend in England, of the meeting between the two :—

"... Last Sunday I lunched with Mr. Rockefeller, senr., and his son. They are a most charming family. Mr. Rockefeller, senr., was eighty-two years of age last birthday, and is as active as a boy. In mere playfulness he drew a dining-room chair away from the table, and standing on one leg he was able to throw the other leg over the back of the chair and then, reversing on to the other foot, to do the same with the other leg, and so on repeatedly without either losing balance or touching the chair. ...

"Lunch was at the son's house, and the son and his wife and their son were the only other persons present except myself and two of my colleagues. There was the warmest love and affection between them all without any parade. When the boy was leaving after lunch he came up to his grandfather and kissed him, and the grandfather gave him five cents. I understand this is the universal practice of the grandfather when he meets his grandson—never more, and I need not say never less.

"The meal was of the simplest. The house was very beautiful with a great deal of Oriental porcelain of great rarity, which is exactly as it should be, because his friends will get a great deal of pleasure out of these works of art.

"When I arrived there the son introduced me by saying that he thought his father and I had very much in common, to which I replied, 'Except one thing,' and that was that the father had been able to make money in business, and I never could. The old gentleman at once replied, as quick as a flash, that he was sorry to hear that, as he was on the point of asking me if I could lend him some."

Outside the English-speaking countries, the one in which Leverhulme was best known was Belgium. He visited it more frequently than any other country, and his great business interests in the Belgian Congo, coupled with his work on behalf of the natives of the Colony, brought him into close personal touch with the leading men of affairs in Brussels, in which city he became almost a familiar figure. On several occasions, when in Brussels, he was received in audience by King Albert, who always took a deep interest in his work in the Congo. In 1923 Leverhulme

THE JAPANESE GARDEN AT RIVINGTON

Photo by Stewart Bale

BRIDGE AT RIVINGTON DESIGNED BY LORD LEVERHULME

Photo by Stewart Bale

arranged for the purchase of a corner building in the rue Royale overlooking the Colonne du Congrès, where Belgium's Unknown Soldier was afterwards buried. This building, which was named "Lever House," he converted into a dignified range of offices to house the clerical and administrative staffs of his various Belgian interests, which included Les Huileries du Congo Belge and associated companies, as well as the Savonneries Lever Frères at Forest-Midi and oil refineries at Baesrode. In the basement he installed a restaurant for the staff, a museum to illustrate the products and native handicrafts of the Congo, and also a cinema theatre for the exhibition of films descriptive of the Congo.

In the spring of 1920 Leverhulme visited South Africa, accompanied by a party which included several business colleagues—of whom the present writer was one—and his friend Jonathan Simpson. One of the striking things about this journey was the length of time Leverhulme spent on the ocean compared with the duration of his stay on land, for thirty-seven days were occupied by his outward and homeward voyages, and only eight days were spent in South Africa. All the heads of the associated companies in the Union met him on his arrival, and a special train was engaged to take the entire party to Johannesburg. One of the compartments became a temporary office, and in it he outlined his proposals in connection with the formation of a Central Administration Board for the local control of the firm's South African interests and explained the reorganization, within the separate companies, which was entailed. By the time the train reached Johannesburg everyone concerned had been separately interviewed and had had his new responsibilities explained to him, so that the whole matter was settled and finished with.

Two days having been spent in Johannesburg, Leverhulme returned to Cape Town, the remainder of the party going on to Durban. After a few hours in Cape Town, during which he had interviews with the Governor-General (Lord Buxton), the Prime Minister (General Smuts) and the Minister of Industries, he sailed for England. An interesting incident connected with this visit to South Africa was his meeting with Sir Harry Lauder, who, with Lady Lauder, was amongst the passengers on board his outward-bound steamer, the *Llanstephan Castle*. The friendship formed during this voyage was continued afterwards, and two years later Sir Harry and Lady Lauder visited him at Lews Castle.

In the autumn of 1923 Leverhulme embarked upon his fifth journey round the world, sailing on board the *Majestic* from Southampton on November 14th and arriving home in England on March 24th, 1924. The places he touched at in America and Canada included New York, Boston, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver. He was accompanied during this part of his journey by a number of his business associates, including myself, Sir Herbert Morgan, and Mr. Francis D'Arcy Cooper, now chairman of Lever Brothers, who had joined the Board as joint vice-chairman at the beginning of the year. Mr. Cooper had been one of the senior partners of Cooper Brothers, the firm's auditors, and after his demobilization at the end of the War—during which he had been wounded when serving with the Artillery in France—he had worked in close personal touch with Leverhulme in connection with many of his business interests.

My father also took with him, as a companion on this long journey round the world, his friend Jonathan Simpson. Mr. Simpson's name has many times found its way into these pages, and it is inevitable that this should have been so, for his was the closest personal friendship of my father's life, and stood in a niche of its own. Many interests and traits in common bound the two men together—art in general and architecture in particular, the collecting of old furniture and pictures, the associations and recollections of boyhood and youth, and last, but not least, a keen sense of humour which, in each case, was of very much the same type. The companionship, begun at Miss Aspinwall's school in Wood Street, Bolton, lasted, without a single cross-current, throughout my father's life.

In the States and Canada Leverhulme accepted several invitations to speak in public. At New York he was the principal guest at the 184th dinner of the Sphinx Club, and gave a characteristic address on the principles and purposes of advertising. The following quotation from his speech gives the gist of his message to the large assembly of representative American advertising men who formed his audience and gave him, when he resumed his seat, one of the most genuine and spontaneous ovations which I can remember :—

" Leagues of Nations may totter and sway, but the eternal principles, which are the fundamentals of honest business, will continue to advance

humanity to brotherhood and abolish artificial barriers between the several nations. Advertising only means keeping up with the times and the big advance in modern business.

"Good advertising will bring new business which should more than pay for its cost. The cost is not necessarily paid in selling the article. It pays to advertise for to-morrow. The increased turnover resulting from advertising more than pays for the apparent increase in cost. The consumer pays no more because the producer can accept a smaller margin of profit because of his greater sales.

"Honesty in advertising, the motto of this great Club, where I was cordially received twenty-two years ago, is a cardinal principle in your country and also in mine. Sooner or later the dishonest advertiser disappears. The advertiser of our times is not working for to-day only. He is laying his foundations deep. He is building for those who will follow after him. It should be the same with nations. Unless there is an honest fulfilment of every engagement entered into by them, the house their children live in hereafter will not be a very lovely place."

In Canada he addressed luncheon gatherings of the Canadian Clubs of Winnipeg and Vancouver.

Only Leverhulme, Mr. Simpson and Mr. Cooper made the full journey round the world, the rest of the party returning to England from Vancouver. They crossed the Pacific in the *Niagara*, and after calling at the Sandwich Islands and at Suva in the Fiji Islands, they reached Auckland, New Zealand, on December 27th. From Auckland they went overland to Wellington, and thence to Australia, where they visited Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Tasmania.

Leverhulme's last visit to the Antipodes will be remembered by the Australian public chiefly by reason of the outspoken candour and vigour with which, after an interval of ten years, he returned to the "White Australia" question and denounced the policy of excluding coloured labour from the Northern Territories. It would have been easy for him to have turned his tour of Australia into a triumphal progress by confining his speeches, as many visitors do, to eulogies of the beauties and future possibilities of the Commonwealth and the wisdom and far-sightedness of her Government; he chose, however, the less popular but more courageous alternative of pointing out certain mistakes which he considered were being made in Australian policy, particularly the exclusion of coloured labour and the adoption of high protective tariffs. He had for a long time held

the view that Australia could never hope to develop the sugar and cotton plantations in her semi-tropical Northern Territories and compete in the open markets of the world, so long as the manual labour in those regions was restricted to the white man, who, apart from requiring much higher wages than is paid for native labour in competing countries, is neither racially nor physically adapted to work of this kind in hot climates. On every suitable occasion that presented itself, therefore, he felt it to be his duty to point out the mistake which, in his opinion, the Government was making. While one can sympathize with the abstract ideal of a "White Australia," one must admit that there were powerful economic arguments on Leverhulme's side, and that he was not a false prophet is shown by the fact that, in the year following his visit, there was a surplus of some 200,000 tons of raw sugar which Australia could not sell in competition with other producing centres, and which had eventually to be disposed of at a heavy loss.

Before me as I write is an album of cuttings taken from Australian newspapers and comprising interviews, reports of speeches, leading articles and cartoons. They clearly show the storm of discussion and criticism, mostly adverse, which Leverhulme's pronouncements aroused. The cartoons are particularly interesting and, looked at in retrospect, amusing. One shows him in the guise of a schoolboy being punished by a teacher labelled "Australia" for spilling black ink on a clean white map of the Commonwealth. Another cartoon depicts him with a fulcrum branded "Unpopular Views" levering a tired youth labelled "Australia" out of a bed marked "National Complacency."

While in Adelaide he was invited to open King's College at Kensington, a new college founded under the joint auspices of the Congregational and Baptist Churches of Australia.

Leverhulme and his party left Australia early in February and landed at Colombo towards the end of the month; thence they went to Tuticorin in Southern India, and after visiting Madras and Calcutta, they crossed India to Bombay, returning home via the Suez Canal and Marseilles. My father had never been in India before, and one was sorry that it was not possible for him to see more of that interesting country, but it was an

unavailing regret, for in the case of all his later journeys his itineraries were cut to a fine point, and he would never allow himself any margins for sight-seeing. He did, however, manage to break his journey at Delhi and Agra. At Delhi he lunched with the Viceroy (Lord Reading) and was very interested, as a town-planner, in seeing the new city, while at Agra he found that he had reached the Mecca of all lovers of beautiful architecture, for the Taj Mahal, seen in its lustrous whiteness against the azure of a cloudless Indian sky, is probably the one building in the world to which the epithet "perfect" can be applied.

My father had written home from Australia asking for preparations to be made for a visit to the Belgian Congo and British West Africa during the following autumn and winter. We urged him to reconsider his decision and not to lay himself open, at the age of seventy-three, to the strain and risks of such a long and arduous journey in tropical Africa, but in vain. His desire to revisit the Congo, to see for himself the progress which had been made by Les Huileries du Congo Belge and to make plans for the future, is easy to understand, for the Congo enterprise was his own child. "Our one dark spot to-day is Nigeria and other British West African Colonies," he had told his shareholders two years previously, and he considered that he would be failing in his duty to those shareholders if he did not visit these colonies as well as the Congo and study on the spot the problems which confronted him. To his friends he made light of the journey, and spoke jokingly about those who tried to make "his time of life" an excuse for depriving him of "the joys" of such a visit. The fact remains, however, that deep within his own consciousness was the call of duty, and not all the pleadings of his colleagues or the counsel of such well-known specialists in tropical medicine as Sir Ronald Ross could shake in the smallest degree his resolution.

Leverhulme sailed for the Congo from Antwerp on board the *Thysville* on September 23rd, 1924, accompanied by, amongst others, Mr. E. Hyslop Bell (the chairman of the Niger Company) and Mr. J. Thorburn Irvine (the managing director of Les Huileries du Congo Belge). A cinematograph operator also went with the expedition, and the film which he made forms a wonderful and graphic record of the tour. As the *Thysville* was

leaving Antwerp, Leverhulme received the following telegram from the King of the Belgians :—

"BRUXELLES. 23/9/24.

"Vous félicitant de l'initiative que vous avez si vaillamment prise d'aller vous-même au Congo, je vous exprime ma vive sympathie et vous addresse mes meilleurs vœux.—ALBERT." [1]

This message, at the outset of his journey, was a great encouragement to Leverhulme, and the reply which he sent was the first of a series of communications dealing with various aspects of his visit which he dispatched to King Albert.

The party arrived at Matadi on October 13th and the itinerary which they followed, first on the railway to Leopoldville (Kinshasa), the headquarters of the "H.C.B.," and then in the stern-wheeler *Lusanga* on the Congo, Kwilu and Kasai Rivers, was largely the same as the route which Sir William and Lady Lever had taken thirteen years earlier, all the five areas—Alberta, Elisabetha, Flandria, Brabanta and Leverville—being visited in the order named. Great were the changes and developments which had taken place since Leverhulme's last visit, not only in the outward appearance of the stations, mills and plantations, but in the commercial position of the undertaking. After twelve years of patient nurturing and heavy expenditure, the Congo enterprise was now established, to the confounding of his earlier critics, as an assured success. His policy of planting palm-trees on a large scale, of applying machinery and the principles of mass production to the treatment of palm fruit and palm kernels, and at the same time of establishing well laid-out native villages, hospitals and schools, had proved to be the right one, and thus a programme which many had looked upon as a piece of idealism and philanthropy had turned out to be sound common sense.

In order that the reader may appreciate the scope of Leverhulme's undertaking in the Congo and the extent to which it had developed since his first visit in the winter of 1912–13, a few comparative figures will be of interest. In 1913 his main task had been to select sites on which to erect mills—only at Leverville had a mill been actually established, and it was a comparatively small one ; in 1924 seven mills were working in

[1] "I congratulate you on the initiative you have so courageously taken in going yourself to the Congo, and would like to express my keen interest and my best wishes.—ALBERT."

the five areas, and the palm fruit collected in that year amounted to 54,000 tons, while the palm kernels produced exceeded 4,000 tons, and the palm oil approached 10,000 tons. In 1913 road-making had hardly begun ; by 1924 the H.C.B. had constructed a thousand kilometres of road, laid over seventy kilometres of railway track, and the number of their own river craft had increased to nineteen steamers and seventy-two barges. In 1913 the European staff numbered 110 ; in 1924 it amounted to over 200, and the increase in the native staff was from under 3,000 to 17,000. In 1913 there was no hospital and only one doctor ; in 1924 there were ten hospitals and a doctor at each. In 1913 there were no schools in the concessions ; in 1924 there were large and fully equipped schools, erected by the Company, at Alberta and Leverville, and one was about to be built at Elisabetha. In 1913 the building of houses for natives and Europeans had only begun ; by 1924 500 permanent brick houses had been constructed for natives and over 200 houses for Europeans.[1]

Side by side with the growth of the " H.C.B." its associated trading concern, the Société Anonyme d'Entreprises Commerciales au Congo Belge, had extended its interests, and in 1924 the number of " S.A.D.E.C." stores and trading stations was forty-one. In addition to the developments I have mentioned, there were the buildings and stores at the H.C.B. headquarters in Leopoldville, which, together with the residences of the European staff, formed almost a self-contained township. The foregoing will give some impression—prosaic and unadorned—of the size and diversity of the work initiated and carried out by Leverhulme in the Congo.

During this last journey he made proposals for a periodical to be conducted in connection with Lever Brothers' African interests. It was to show on its cover a white hand clasping a black one, in such a position as to suggest that a white man was standing on a bank and helping a black man to climb up it. This device of the helping hand aptly symbolized Leverhulme's policy in the Congo. In approaching native problems his mind was singularly free from false sentiment. He had no sympathy with those who patronized the native and adopted towards him

[1] At the end of 1926 there were fifteen hospitals, five schools, and 1,200 permanent brick houses for natives, while the European staff numbered 335 and the native staff 23,000, all these increases being part of the development programme laid down by Leverhulme during this visit.

a tone of benign superiority, nor with those who looked upon the native as a being to be driven rather than led. His point of view, put simply, was this. In Europe and America there was the white man whose own soil and climate could not furnish certain of his essential needs; in Africa there was the black man living in a land where Nature in her most prodigal mood heaped in profusion the products which the white man needed. The white man possessed organizing ability and capital; the black man, although better adapted physically to the climate of the Tropics, possessed neither organizing ability nor the reserves of capital which accumulated savings bring. "A native," Leverhulme once said, "cannot organize. He cannot even run a wooding post on the river satisfactorily. You have only to compare one run by a native with one run by a European to prove that." He held, therefore, that both the white man and the black man were essential to the development of Africa. He believed that the day of native self-government lay in the far distant future, the principles of "government of the people by the people for the people" being at present as remote from the mentality of a Congo village as are the methods of Harley Street from those of a native medicine-man. But in all that concerned the education, health, happiness and comfort of the native he was unceasingly solicitous.

Several incidents during the journey illustrated his thoughtfulness for the natives. He was distressed one day at seeing the palm fruit cutters jerking themselves barefooted up the rough and jagged trunks of the palm-trees, and he evolved a boot, fitted with crêpe rubber, which he hoped would protect the natives' feet without lessening their grip. Some of these boots were made and sent out to Africa, but unfortunately they did not prove entirely successful, as it was found impossible to fasten the rubber to the boot with sufficient firmness to stand the strain.

A little while before he left England, Leverhulme had designed what he considered to be the most practical form of permanent brick house for the natives—a simple dwelling, but, compared with a mud hut, a mansion. In one of the areas he found that plans had been made for erecting these houses with the backs of one row facing the fronts of the next. "You wouldn't build rows of houses back to front in England," he said to the manager, "and you mustn't do it out here."

At Stanleyville the Governor of the province showed him the statistics relating to infant mortality amongst the natives. He was shocked at the high rate, and before leaving the colony he arranged, in consultation with the Government authorities, for the establishment, at the Company's expense, of an infant welfare and maternity service to be placed in the hands of the Catholic Sisters who were about to arrive in the Congo to superintend the girls' schools in the H.C.B. areas.

On the stern-wheeler *Lusanga*, while travelling from area to area, every hour of Leverhulme's time was occupied either with correspondence, conferences with his colleagues and local managers or in making his plans for further developments. He was immensely enthusiastic over the Congo's future prospects, and he formed the intention of paying another visit in 1926 and yet another in 1928. In addition to the volume of letters which he wrote during this journey he kept a daily diary amounting, when typed, to 300 quarto pages. The record is almost entirely confined to business matters, but the following extracts are of general interest.

"*October 13th. Boma.*—The Governor having to remain to receive visitors, the Governor's wife went with us to the hospital, which we found well kept and doing a very good work. From there to the Lazaretto, where leprosy, sleeping sickness, and other similar cases are treated. It was all very well kept and all was being done that could be done, but it made one very sad and wonder why such diseases as leprosy, sleeping sickness, etc., should have been found necessary in the Divine scheme of the universe. But this does not change my faith that it is all for a wise purpose in building up human nature on a higher level than otherwise possible."

"*October 29th. Alberta.*—Lunch at the house of one of the Plantation Managers and then back towards Alberta, calling at Father Dereume's schools on the way—these showed well both for planning and scholars, quite young natives doing excellently as joiners and in engineering. Their exercise books in French would do credit to English youths of corresponding ages, and yet these lads had not yet, so I was told, attended school for one year."

"*November 1st. Elisabetha.*—Cannot speak in too high praise of medical service, and I approved extensions asked for. Palmeries the finest yet for number and size of bunches. Our native village very good and again swarming with children. We went over mill and then to offices —which latter require rebuilding—and I took levels, plans, etc., by sight to aid me in planning new offices while on way to Stanleyville. . . . At our last H.C.B. native village the natives got to know who I was and

followed us for nearly two miles, yelling and shouting, jumping and clapping their hands, and I am told the words were :—

Mukundje, Munene
Na m'Bila

(The Big Chief of the Palm Tree Company)."

"*November 25th. Kikwit.*—After lunch Father Van Hee called for us and we crossed the river to the Jesuit Mission. On arrival we were met on the beach by Father Allard of Kikwit and other Reverend Fathers and lay brethren. Saw their fine herds of cattle, sheep and goats. Father Van Hee gave us a young bull for meat for station and ourselves. Visited the Mother Superior and Sisters, who gave us an excellent tea. We then went with the Fathers over schools, workshops and church—the latter most excellent architecture, plain and ecclesiastical on fine simple lines, the best Congo church I have yet seen. The Fathers do a wonderful work here and love the life, 'working with their hands' like the apostles of old. I saw the football field. The natives love the game and play bare-foot, but so vigorously that they soon burst the footballs."

"*November 30th. Sunday. Kinshasa.*—With Mr. Bell I attended divine service at Baptist Mission Chapel, 11.0, and I read the lesson. No negroes present—not allowed—they have their special services at other hours. Coast negroes asked some time ago to be permitted to attend the white man's service, but were asked if they would permit the Congo natives to attend with the Coast negroes—reply, 'No.' What will heaven be like ?"

For Leverhulme's return voyage a steam yacht, the *Albion*, had been chartered so that he might call at a number of West African ports. This yacht met the expedition on its return to Matadi, and from there Leverhulme, Hyslop Bell and others who were making the full journey sailed for Burutu in Nigeria, the headquarters of the Niger Company, calling on the way at Pointe-Noire in the French Congo, where they made a journey to the railhead of the new railway under construction from that point to Brazzaville on the border of the Belgian Congo. Other places touched at included Port Gentil in the French Congo—in which colony Lever Brothers, through their associated company, the Compagnie Propriétaire du Kwilu Niari, own 7,500,000 acres of freehold land—Duala and Victoria in the British Cameroons, and Calabar in Nigeria. After the party had spent some little time at Burutu, the *Albion* proceeded to Accra in the Gold Coast, where Leverhulme was joined by D'Arcy Cooper, who had left England a fortnight earlier. From Accra they sailed to Port Harcourt in Nigeria, from which centre they

visited various points by train, motor or launch, and then sailed for Lagos, where they remained five days.

While Leverhulme was at Lagos there occurred an incident to which, at the time, considerable publicity was given in the Press. For the past two or three years he had seen reason to criticize the Government administration in Nigeria, especially the colony's system of land tenure, its heavy taxation and general fiscal policy. In recent speeches at the annual meetings of Lever Brothers he had been outspoken in his denunciation of what he described as the "bureaucratic and autocratic" methods of the Nigerian Government, and the Governor-General, Sir Hugh Clifford, had replied with equal vigour in his addresses to the Legislative Assembly as well as in speeches in England. When Leverhulme arrived in Lagos the Governor-General invited him and his colleagues to dine with him at Government House, and Leverhulme, who had never intended his criticisms to be taken as personal attacks on Sir Hugh Clifford, naturally desired to offer hospitality in return. His invitation was declined, however, Sir Hugh giving as his reason his unwillingness to be Leverhulme's guest unless he withdrew certain of the statements he had made. Leverhulme's final reply was that there was nothing he could truthfully withdraw, honestly modify or conscientiously regret having uttered.

From Lagos the party travelled up the 700 miles of the main Nigerian railway to Kano, the terminus of the line and the centre of the ground-nut trade; from there they went to the tin mining area of the Bauchi Plateau. On January 27th they reached Baro on the Niger, and from there proceeded by stern-wheeler down the river to Burutu, calling at a number of places on the way to inspect the trading stations of the Niger Company and other associated companies. From Burutu they sailed in the *Albion* to the Gold Coast, where they visited Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi and Winneba, at which port they rejoined the yacht. On February 22nd they sailed for home, calling at Grand Bassam, Sassandra in the Ivory Coast, Cape Palmas in Liberia, Freetown in Sierra Leone, Conakry in French Guinea, Bathurst in Gambia, and Dakar in the French Senegal.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE END

MY father arrived home in London on the 15th of March. Since leaving England in the previous September he had travelled over fifteen thousand miles, and, although the greater part of his journey had been in the heart of tropical Africa, he had not known a day's illness. The experience, however, had been a severe tax upon his strength, and during the homeward voyage he had rested far more than was his wont, sleeping very often throughout the morning and again later in the day. His work in Africa finished, he longed to be at home, and after leaving the Gold Coast his one desire was to get back to England with the least delay. I had arranged to go to Las Palmas so that I might travel home with my father and his colleagues, but a few days before I was due to start he cabled asking me to meet him at Casablanca instead. The next day a further message reached me to say that, in order to arrive home a day or two earlier, he was putting in at Lisbon and proceeding overland from there.

A heavy programme of work awaited his return, important matters of business to be decided, the preparation of speeches for the annual meetings of Lever Brothers and the Niger Company (of which he was Governor), as well as a number of public engagements to which he was committed. A journey abroad always meant an extra pressure of work immediately after his return, but on this occasion it seemed to be more the case than ever before. At Scarborough on Easter Monday—April 13th—he presided over the annual meeting of the Institute of Certificated Grocers (of which he was the president), and in the course of his address spoke of his own early experiences when he was learning the rudiments of his father's business. He urged the young men present, who were then passing through the corresponding period in their own lives, to make the most of their opportunities and, above all, to avoid remaining in a rut. "A rut," he said, "is like a grave, only longer." He spoke also of the stimulus of fear,

and gave a happy illustration of what he meant by telling a story which he had heard on his last visit to Fiji. An English settler, thinking what a paradise for bees that garden of flowers would make, had introduced some. For the first year all went well and the bees filled their hives with honey in the usual way, but when they found that in their new home it was summer all the year round and that there was no purpose to be served in storing honey for a winter which never came, they ceased from their labours.

Three days after his visit to Scarborough, Leverhulme went to Brussels, as it was always his custom to do in April, for the annual meeting of Les Huileries du Congo Belge. On the day following his arrival a private exhibition of the film illustrating his journey in the Congo was given at the headquarters of the Union Coloniale before King Albert, his eldest son, the Crown Prince Leopold—who was himself about to visit the Colony—the Belgian Colonial Minister and an audience eminently representative of Government and commercial circles associated with the Congo. In the evening my father and I had the honour of dining with the King and Queen and their family at the Royal Palace at Laeken. The next day the annual meeting of Les Huileries du Congo Belge was held, and in the evening a dinner and dance were given at the Taverne Royale to the co-partners of the Savonneries Lever Frères. The following morning we returned to England, and the drive which I had with my father across London from Victoria to Euston will always live in my memory. In Brussels every moment of his time had been busily occupied, but he had appeared to be in splendid health ; at his hotel, scorning the lift, he had on every occasion run up the two flights of stairs to his sitting-room, two steps at a time, and many remarked upon his exceptional energy and fitness. As was his custom, he had slept throughout the voyage from Ostend to Dover, and during this drive through London he seemed wonderfully exhilarated by his visit to Brussels and spoke to me with almost boyish enthusiasm of the prospects of the Congo enterprise and of his plans for further visits. Our route lay past Grosvenor House, and it was then that he told me that he had not yet finally decided upon the detailed purpose to which he would put the building ; he then went on to talk of several other projects which he was hoping to carry out within the next ten

years. That those ten years would be his no one who knew him well had any reason to doubt.

Four days later, on April 22nd, he presided over the annual meeting of the Niger Company in London, and on the following day over the annual meeting of Lever Brothers at Port Sunlight. The address which he gave there was perhaps the most stimulating, provocative and essentially characteristic of all the long series of annual speeches—over thirty in number—to which his shareholders had listened. Those shareholders, he pointed out, now exceeded 187,000; the total number of co-partners was over 18,000, and the nominal value of their Co-partnership certificates amounted to more than £1,940,000. In accordance with precedent he spoke not only of the business of Lever Brothers, but of the position of industry in general, and in the course of his address made a trenchant reply to certain critics who had been suggesting that the firm had been making in profits double the amount drawn in wages by the employees.

> "What I think must have happened," he said, "is that the Socialists consider that the total profits of Lever Brothers, including all interest on working capital, are made by the few thousands of workers employed at Port Sunlight. Let me inform these Socialist orators that these profits are made by over 60,000 white people living and working in almost every country in the world, and by 25,000 native Africans working in Central Africa—a total of 85,000; in addition to which there are over 1,000 directors of Associated Companies, with their managers and foremen. . . . The Ordinary shareholders and co-partners have to make for wages, salaries, interest on capital, rates, taxes and all other expenses of this business, exclusive of raw materials, twenty shillings for others, to receive sevenpence-halfpenny for themselves."

He described to his shareholders the long journey he had taken on their behalf and sketched a clear and vivid picture of the progress—commercial, educational and medical—which had been accomplished in the Belgian Congo. Turning to British West Africa, he drew a picturesque comparison between the system of land tenure in Nigeria and Great Britain, pointing out that while the black man was as legally entitled as the white man to buy freehold land in England, in Nigeria freeholds were only possible for the black man and the Government. Had this system obtained in Great Britain, he would never have ventured, he said, to ask the public to subscribe one penny of capital,

"and so Port Sunlight, which less than forty years ago was known as 'The Marshes,' would never have sprung into existence."

After the meeting he went to Rivington for the week-end, and at Bolton on the Sunday afternoon he presided over, and gave an address to, a large gathering of scholars at the Sunday-school attached to Blackburn Road Congregational Church—the church which he had raised as a memorial to his parents. The same night he travelled to London in the sleeping-car train from Manchester.

Either on this night journey or when taking an evening walk at Rivington my father caught a severe chill, to which he was no doubt rendered more liable by reason of his sojourn in the Tropics. On the Monday he was too feverish for a visit to the office to be possible, but he persisted in carrying through the work he had on hand, and—obviously with great effort—he transacted the day's business through his secretaries. The following day it was realized that he was suffering from a severe attack of bronchitis. On the Wednesday I was summoned to London, not by any message of alarm, but in order to be with him and, as far as possible, to keep business matters away from him. As the week wore on, his illness developed into pneumonia, which, in view of his age, was a cause of deep anxiety, although throughout the week-end his strength was wonderfully maintained and we had reason to hope that his exceptional physique would enable him to recover. On the Tuesday, however, he became weaker, and his physician, Lord Dawson, urged the necessity for a far graver bulletin than had yet been considered necessary. As the hours went by the end became inevitable, and on Thursday, the 7th of May, at 4.30 in the morning—the hour at which he had been accustomed to begin the work of each long and busy day—he passed peacefully away.

Two days later my father's body was taken to Port Sunlight, and at the expressed desire of the people of the village lay in state at the Lady Lever Art Gallery during the Saturday night and Sunday, the coffin being placed at the end of the central hall beneath Leighton's "Daphnephoria," and there thousands of those amongst whom he had lived and worked came to pay their final tribute of respect. On Monday, May 11th, he was laid to rest beneath the western window of Christ Church beside her

without whose companionship and memory his life's work could never have been accomplished.

My father, I shall always be comforted to think, was never really conscious of the critical nature of his last illness. One day, about a week before he died, he told me that he felt his illness must be accepted as a warning that he had been overtaxing his strength, and that he would take the lesson to heart. Momentarily there was the vision of a golden eventide to his life, and the hope that the years to follow would be marked by less strenuous endeavour. But it was not to be; perhaps it never could have been. He left many tasks unfinished, but however long he had lived it would no doubt have been the same. That he would ever have relaxed of his own free will is doubtful, and the enforced inactivity of an invalid would have been intolerable to him. Although the end came many years earlier than anyone who knew him had reason to expect, he died as he would have wished to die, in the plenitude of his powers, his energy unabated and his courage unimpaired.

INDEX

Adshead, C. T., 126
Advertising, 41, 43–5, 55, 57, 70–1, 77, 307
Albert, King, 164, 168, 176, 304, 310, 317
Alness, Lord, 216–18
America, Lever Brothers in, 62–7, 74, 223
America, Lord Leverhulme in, 302–4, 306
Angus Watson & Co., Messrs., 228
Architecture of Port Sunlight, 87–8
Art Collections, Lord Leverhulme's, 277–88
Arundel, John T., 149, 154–7
Asquith, Mr., 121–2, 130, 236
Auditorium, the, 97, 138, 143, 146, 186, 194, 259
Australia, Lever Brothers in, 61, 69, 74, 182
Australia, Lord Leverhulme's last visit to, 307–8

banking accounts, employees', 204–5
Barrett, Thomas J., 40–1
Beaverbrook, Lord, 192–3
Beissel, M. Franz, 170–1
Belgium, Lever Brothers in, 73–4
Belgium, Lord Leverhulme in, 304–5, 317
Benjamin Brooke & Co., 65, 76, 83
Bertram, Charles, 149
Birkenhead, 48–9, 60, 83–4, 108, 110–11, 193
Birkenhead and District Volunteer Training Corps, the, 187–8
Birkenhead, Lord, 113–14, 129, 137
Bolton, 11–14, 21, 25, 32–5, 37, 104–5, 123–7, 129, 132, 193, 264–5, 283
Bolton Court and Alley Concerts Society, 126–7
Bolton Evening News, the, 27
Bolton School, the, 124–6, 252
Bournville, 87
Brauen, Ernest, 73
Bridge Inn, the, 92–3
Brimelow, John, 13, 19
Bromborough Port Estate, Ltd., 83–4
Brunner, Mond & Co., 300
" Bungalow " at Rivington, the, 176, 296–7
Bungalow burnt down by Suffragettes, The, 176–7
Burford & Sons, Messrs. W. H., 182

Cadbury, Messrs., 87
Calvert theatrical productions, the, 22
Canada, Lever Brothers in, 21, 58, 60, 62, 74, 181
canvassing, Lord Leverhulme's views on, 110
capital and labour, 141–2, 147–8, 248–9, 258
Capital Levy, 258
caravan, inspiration of a, 46–7
Carson, Sir Edward, 136–8
" Cedar Lawn," 265–6
China, Lever Brothers in, 182
China Soap and Candle Co., the, 182
Christ Church, 94–6, 319
Christian Science, 275
cinematograph, the, 72
Clifford, Sir Hugh, 315
Congo Free State, the, 163
Congo, the Belgian, 54, 158, 163–76, 238, 304–5, 309–13, 318
Congregationalist antecedents, 13–16, 95–6, 253–5, 274
Cooper, Francis D'Arcy, 306–7
Co-partners' Club, the, 91
Co-partnership, 26, 52, 141–8, 181, 191, 198, 202, 205–7, 233, 240, 248, 318
Copra, 154, 157
cottage-building, 50, 83, 89, 103
Cottage Hospital, the, 97
Countway, Francis A., 66
crofts, 216–17
Crompton, Samuel, 123–4
Crosfield & Sons, Joseph, 42, 222

Curtis Davis Corporation, the, 65
Curzon, Lord, 61–2, 235–6

Daily Mail, attack of the, 135
Daylight Saving, 202–3
deafness, Lord Leverhulme's, 176, 272
Decimal System of Coinage Bill, Lord Southwark's, 231–2
de Keyser's Hotel, 228
development of business, 33–6, 42, 45–6, 48, 51, 57, 76
Dickinson, Alwin, 156
Dodds, T. L., 111
Douglas & Fordham, Messrs., 87, 91

Ebury, Lord, 229–30
eight-hour day, the, 84, 199
Eisteddfod, Lord Leverhulme as President of the, 193–4
Ellis, A. F., 154–5
Employees' Benefit Fund, 84
Employees' Holiday Camp, 204
Employees' Holiday Club, 84
Erasmic Co., Ltd., the, 222
experts, Lord Leverhulme's mistrust of, 245–6

Faculty of Arts, the, 267
family spirit in business, the, 26
fear, the stimulus of, 246–7, 316–17
Federation of Grocers' Associations, 43
Ferguson, James Lever, 83
Ferguson, J. S., 83, 91
finance, Lord Leverhulme's system of, 240
fishing industry, Lord Leverhulme and the, 212
Following the Flag, W. H. Lever's, 60–1
Ford, Henry, 57
France, Lever Brothers in, 71, 73–4
Free Library, the Lever, 92
Frith, W. P., 43

Ganong, J. E., 181
Geelkerken, A. P. van, 73–4
Germany, Lever Brothers in, 73
Girls' Social Club, 92
Gladstone, Mr., 55, 91, 108–10, 121
Gray, John, 83
Gray, J. Proctor, 61
Grayson & Ould, Messrs., 87–8, 92, 97, 104
Greenhalgh, H. R., 157, 161, 167
Greenhalgh, John, 20, 70
Gross, Sydney, 77
Group Life Insurance, 206–7

"Hall i' th' Wood" Museum, the, 123–4, 252
Hampstead home, Lord Leverhulme's, 292–6
Harding, Miss Alice, 80
Harley, George, 129, 139, 143, 192
Harris, Island of, 220–1, 224
Harwood Lodge, 28
Hemmerde, E. G., 137
Hesketh, Mrs., 19
High Sheriff, Lord Leverhulme as, 262
Hodgson & Simpson, Ltd., 83
Holland, Lever Brothers in, 74
Honolulu, 61
Horn, Dr. Max, 164, 166, 169
Hoult, Joseph, 112–13
Hudson, Ltd., R. S., 83, 193
Hulme, Elizabeth Ellen (Mrs. W. H. Lever), 29–31, 46–7, 49, 58–9, 61, 68–9, 82, 92, 95, 104, 138, 149, 152, 168, 176, 178–9, 319–20
Hulme Hall, the, 92, 184, 188

imagination, 245
Ince, 32–3
Isaacs, Rufus, 137–8

Japan, 181
John, Augustus, 282
John, Sir William Goscombe, 196, 281
Jones, Sir Alfred, 164, 256

Keyser, Sir Polydore de, 228–9
Kitchen & Sons, Messrs. J., 182
Kitchener, Lord, 279

Labour, 249
Labour and Housing at Port Sunlight, W. L. George's, quoted, 85
Labour Question, the, 198
Lady Lever Art Gallery, the, 90, 92, 179, 252, 284–8, 296, 319
Lancashire Grocer, the, 35
Lancaster House, 253
Land Tax, 60
Lauder, Sir Harry, 305
Lavanchy-Clarke, F. H., 70–3
Leclaire, M., 53
Lees, Sir Elliott, 110, 112
Leopold II, King, 163–4
Lever, Adam de, 12
Lever, Alice, 30
Lever and Co., 25, 32, 34–5, 37
Lever Brothers, 48, 50–2, 57, 60, 65–7, 73, 76–7, 81, 83–5, 88, 90, 96, 105, 125, 133–4, 136, 146, 148, 149–50, 152–3, 157, 161–2, 164–8, 180–2, 185–6, 190, 193, 195, 199, 204–8, 213, 222–8, 239–40, 246, 250, 272, 289, 301, 314, 316, 318
Lever Brothers, Overseas Associated Companies of, 27
Lever, Charles, 12
Lever, derivation of the name of, 11–12
Lever, Henry, 12
Leverhulme, Lord (*see under Lever, William Hesketh*)
Lever, James, 13, 19–20, 23, 25–8, 30, 33, 39, 43, 49, 76, 105–6, 239
Lever, James Darcy, 76, 79, 82, 104, 150, 239
Lever, Lady (*see under Hulme, Elizabeth Ellen*)
Lever, Mrs. James, 104–5
Levers' Pacific Plantations, Ltd., 157
Lever's Pure Honey Soap, 38
Lever, Robert, 12, 124
Lever Trust, the, 125
Leverville, 167, 169
Lever Wholesale Grocery Co., Ltd., the, 43
Lever, William Hesketh (Lord Leverhulme), parentage, 11; his Congregationalist antecedents, 13–16, 95–6, 253–5, 274; his schooldays, 16–18; enters his father's business, 19–20; his early love of reading, 21–2; as a diarist,
Lever, William Hesketh (Lord Leverhulme)—*Continued*
23–4, 170; as a commercial traveller, 25, 32; visits America, 27, 57; describes himself as "lazy," 28; his marriage, 29, 31; enters partnership with his father, 30; his first house, 32; his second house, 34; becomes a soap-maker, 37; involved in law cases, 41; severs his connection with the grocery trade, 43; founds "Port Sunlight," 48–51; views on profit-sharing, 54–5; compared with Henry Ford, 57; his views on Missions, 59, 255; visits Canada and America, 62–7; in South Africa, 67; on the Continent, 70–4; his restless energy, 75, 241, 268–9; forms a Limited Liability Company, 76; as Chairman of the Company, 78–82; as an architect, 86–7, 89, 117–18, 181, 256, 290; his ideas on social life, 90, 98, 121; his interest in Sunday-schools, 94–5; his recreations, 101–2; and the theatre, 107, 272; as a politician, 108–22; becomes a Governor of Bolton School, 124; negotiates for the Rivington Park Estate, 127–32; and the newspaper attacks of 1906, 134–40; and Co-partnership, 141–8; is created a Baronet, 151; in the Solomon Islands, 158–60; his enterprise in the Belgian Congo, 166–75; his deafness, 176, 272; his great bereavement, 178–9; and the War, 185–92; is raised to the Peerage, 192; his views on war memorials, 195–6; and the six-hour day, 198–203; and the housing problem, 205; summary of his contribution to the problems of industrial life, 206–7; purchases Lewis Island, 211; purchases the Island of Harris, 214; in the House of Lords, 231–7; is created a Viscount, 237; his qualities as a business man, 238–50; his public work, 251–67; as a speaker, 259–60; as a Free-

Lever, William Hesketh (Lord Leverhulme)—*Continued*
mason, 260–1; his domestic habits, 268–71; as a reader, 273–4; his veneration for the Bible, 275–6; as an Art Collector, 277–88; as a landscape gardener, 297–8; as a traveller, 301–2; his policy in the Congo, 311–12; his death, 319
Lewis and Harris, Isles of, 208–21, 237, 298, 301
Lewis, Island of, 37
Liberal Party, the, 108–15
Liverpool Corporation, the, 127–32
Liverpool University, 255–6
Lloyd George, Mr., 194, 236
Local Government and Port Sunlight, 90
Local option, 93
London offices, the, 78, 106
Long Service Awards, 84

Mac Fisheries, 212, 222, 227–8
MacIver & Co., W. B., 162, 224
Management, 141–4, 148, 248
margarine, 192
Mason, William Tate, 16, 130
Matheson, Sir James, 210
Mawson, Thomas H., 86, 264, 290, 295
Mayor of Bolton, Lord Leverhulme as, 262–3
Meek, Joseph, 157–8, 182
Messel Medal, the, 258–9
Monkey Brand Soap, 65, 77
Moor Park Estate, the, 229–30
Moseley, Lichfield H., 164, 167, 169, 173

Nauru, 155–6
newspaper attacks on Lever Brothers, 134–40, 150
Niger Company, Ltd., the, 224–6, 228, 316, 318
Nigeria, 315, 318
Northcliffe, Lord, 134–5

Ocean Island, 155–6
Old Age Pensions, 118–20
open-air swimming bath, the, 97–8
Orpen, Sir William, 283
overseas business, 57, 82, 301
Owen, Segar, 87, 95
Owen, William, 48–50, 87

Pacific Islands Company, Ltd., the, 154–5
Pacific Phosphate Company, Ltd., the, 155–6
palm oil, 161–2
Partnership, 142–3
"Pavilion," the, 91
Payment of Members, 118–20
Pears, Ltd., A. and F., 40, 44, 77, 191
Pendray & Co., Messrs. W. J., 181
Philharmonic Society, the, 98, 151
phosphate of lime, 154–5
Planters Products, Ltd., 228
politics, 108–22
portraits of Lord Leverhulme, 281–2
Port Sunlight, 27, 47–50, 54–5, 57, 62, 65, 70, 75, 77–8, 84–99, 101, 111, 113, 121, 138, 141–2, 146, 150–2, 162, 166, 168, 179, 183–8, 193–6, 198, 202–5, 226–8, 238, 246, 259, 318–19
Port Sunlight Recreations Association, the, 204
President Lincoln's assassination, reference to, 17
Price's Candle Works, 87, 222
profit-sharing, 52–4, 141
pro forma accounts, 36
Progress Club, the, 92
"Prosperity Sharing," 26, 54, 141–3
psychical research, 275
Pugsley, Dingman & Co., Messrs., 181

Queen Mary Maternity Home, 265–6

Reilly, Prof. C. H., 88, 256
relations with staff, 25–6, 49–50, 52, 56, 149–50, 204, 243–4
religious influences, 23
Renkin, M. Jules, 164–6, 168
Rhodes, Cecil, 67
Rivington Grammar School, 13
Rivington Hall Estate, the, 127–32
road-making, 252, 299
Robinson, Alfred, 21, 58
Rockefeller, John D., 304

Roosevelt, President, 65–6
Ross, Sir Ronald, 256–7, 309
Royal Crown Soaps, Ltd., the, 181

" Safety First " Movement, the, 258
St. George's Congregational Church, 104–5, 178
Salaman, E. V., 83
Salvidge, Sir Archibald, 113–14
schools, Port Sunlight village, 91
Scottish Board of Agriculture, the, 215
Self-interest, 243
Sheldon & Sons, Messrs., 13, 18
Simpson, James L., 88, 104
Simpson, Jonathan, 21–2, 30, 35, 37, 88, 104–5, 124, 128, 282, 305–7
Six-Hour Day and Other Industrial Questions, Lord Leverhulme's, 202, 258
Six-Hour Day, the, 183, 198–203
Smith, Adam, 142
Smith, Fergus, 114, 116–17
Smith, Robert, 102
Smoking, 102–3
Soap, 20, 33, 37–40, 55, 133, 135–6, 180, 190, 222–3
Soap-makers' Associations, 133–4
Social activities at Port Sunlight, 90
Société Anonyme des Huileries du Congo Belge, la, 165
Solomon Islands, 157–9, 169, 182, 238
South Africa, business in, 67, 74, 151–3, 305, 311
Stafford House, 252–3
Stanley, H. M., 54, 163
" Star and Garter," the, 189
Stewart, Sir Gershom, 185, 194
Stollwerck, Ludwig, 73
Stones, John, 19
Stornoway, 209–15, 218–19
strike at Port Sunlight, 226–7
Sunday-schools, 94–5
Sunlight, 44
Sunlight Soap, 38–40, 43, 70, 239
Surprise Soap Company, the, 180–1
Switzerland, Lever Brothers in, 71–2

Talbot & Wilson, Messrs., 87–8
Tariff Reform, 114
Taylor & Co., W. H. S., 28, 43
Technical Institute, the, 97
Thomasson, Franklin, 21, 113
Thornton Hough, 101, 103–6, 114, 120
Thornton Manor, 50, 59, 75, 80, 82, 88, 100, 103, 106–7, 121, 127, 149, 188, 194, 257, 269, 271–2, 278, 289–92, 295, 299
Tillotson, John Lever, 65, 82, 166
Tillotson Newspaper Literature Syndicate, the, 27
Tillotson, William Frederick, 26–7, 57–8, 82
town planning, 264
Trade Disputes Act of 1906, the, 247–8
Trade-mark, 38–9
Trade-marks Act, the, 38–40
Trade Unionism, 147, 247
Tree, Sir Herbert, 272
Tweedmouth, Lord, 279
two-shift system, the, 198–203

Universities, Lord Leverhulme's gifts to, 257
University men, Lord Leverhulme's views on, 245
Upper Heath House, 266

Vicksburg, 62–4, 74
Village Council, Port Sunlight, 90
Vinolia Co., Ltd., 83

wages, 233–5, 247
Wainwright, Edward, 40
War, the, 185–97, 201
warehouse, the Bolton, 25
Warrington, 39, 42, 44–6, 48, 52, 71, 76, 193, 238
Watson, Angus, 65
Webster, A. L., 191
West Africa, Lever Brothers in, 161–75
whaling, 223–4
" White Australia " question, the, 182–3, 307
Whiteley, George, 116–17
Whitley, J. H., 128
Whyte, Alexander, 66
Wigan, 32–6, 52, 193, 239
Winser, Mrs., 92
Winser, Percy J., 40, 76, 83
Wirral, 112–14, 116–17, 298–9
Wolfendale, A. J., 65

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 09945 981 8

FRANCE AND AMERICA

By André Tardieu

William Allen White: 'The Tardieu book is valuable because it presents with sympathetic frankness but always with merciless honesty the vast difference in tradition, social ideas, and political organization between France and America.'

Frederic L. Paxson: 'One of the frankest and most valuable contributions to the literature of the World War that I have seen. Tardieu knows and understands the United States and writes as a realist should.'

Lawrence F. Abbot: 'No continental European since de Tocqueville and no trans-Atlantic writer of any nationality, save James Bryce, has shown such clear insight into the obscure but none the less real forces of contemporary American life.'

Frederick J. Turner: 'A book that all Americans and all Frenchmen who wish to understand the conditions to be met in the sympathetic coöperation of the two nations should read.'

Biographies and Journals

BISMARCK, ANDRÁSSY AND THEIR SUCCESSORS

By COUNT JULIUS ANDRÁSSY

A judicial and authoritative study of the diplomacy of the last thirty years.

REMINISCENCES OF PRESENT-DAY SAINTS

By FRANCIS GREENWOOD PEABODY

Studies of Edward Everett Hale, Phillips Brooks, Charles W. Eliot, and other striking personalities.

LORD LEVERHULME

By HIS SON

A biography of one of the greatest figures of the modern business world.

THE EDUCATION OF HENRY ADAMS

This great and permanent autobiography is now reissued in a smaller format and at a popular price.

THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE

By SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND

The life-story of a famous explorer and empire builder.

THE BEAUTIFUL MRS. GRAHAM

By MRS. MAXTONE-GRAHAM

A unique record of family and diplomatic life in 18th century France and Russia.

THE HARVEST OF THE YEARS

By LUTHER BURBANK *with* WILBUR HALL

'Through its pages emerges the picture of an American genius.' —*N. Y. Herald Tribune.*

WAR LETTERS 1862–1865

of JOHN CHIPMAN GRAY *and* JOHN CODMAN ROPES

An invaluable picture of the Civil War is given in these letters by two young Bostonians.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY